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BEST FOR JOBS

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30 PAGES OF APPOINTMENTS

Nationwide remains mutual society

Savers reject windfall of £2,000 each

By CAROLINE MERRELL AND JOANNA BAILE

SAVERS with the Nationwide, Britain's biggest building society, yesterday voted by a margin of nearly three to one to forgo a £2,000 windfall in order to retain the society's mutual status.

They rejected, by one million votes to 350,000, moves by five rebel candidates, led by the eccentric former royal butler, Michael Hardern, to convert the society into a bank.

The outcome means that the Nationwide will not follow the Halifax, Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich on to the stockmarket, and will not bestow windfalls on its savers in the form of shares or cash. Instead the society claims it will underline the merits of remaining a mutual building society by offering cheaper loans and higher savers' rates than other banks and former building societies. Last year, the Nationwide handed back £200 million to savers in this way.

Nationwide directors expressed surprise at the overwhelming size of the vote against Mr Hardern and his fellow pro-conversion candidates. Charles Nunneley, Nationwide chairman, said: "The result is a very strong endorsement of strategy."

The high turnout of voters underlined the strength of feeling about the issue. Normally only 300,000 votes on the election of board members.

Nationwide



Nunneley: huge vote to keep mutual status

The victory was welcomed by other building societies and by the Government. The Prime Minister, speaking at Question Time, said: "I was delighted to see the result and I think the right decision was made."

Mr Hardern said last night that he was considering mounting a legal challenge to set up another ballot. He is to consult fellow campaigners in his group, Members For Conversion, over whether to continue their fight.

On the roof terrace of his Soho flat in central London yesterday, Mr Hardern, 40, accused the Nationwide of misrepresenting his views in a

deliberate attempt to persuade savers to vote against conversion.

"The Nationwide black arts department spent £1 million of customers' money making sure they won," he said. "They sent letters out saying that I had changed my mind, so many of my supporters thought I had caved in."

He also claimed that the public had been influenced by staff at branches. "Staff warned voters about branch closures and told them to vote accordingly," he said.

However, Mr Nunneley denied that the vote had been rigged and said the voting pattern at branches and that through the post was similar.

Andrew Lowe, chairman of the All Party Building Societies Committee, is to press ahead with a meeting with Helen Liddell, economic secretary to the Treasury. Mr Lowe said the meeting will discuss ways to prevent a similar situation occurring again. Mr Hardern only needed 50 signatures from the Nationwide's 3.5 million members to make an assault on the board.

The remaining societies breathed a sigh of relief at the result. If Nationwide savers had voted in favour of conversion, then they would have found it difficult to remain mutual. David Anderson, Yorkshire Building Society chief executive, said: "The



Pro-bank campaigner Michael Hardern said at his London home that he may fight on

entire mutual movement can take this as a vote of confidence, a strong signal that our message is getting through, and a victory for common sense."

The vote has left the dissidents who include Julie

Trewhella, a secretary, and Andrew Martin, a computer consultant, arguing among themselves. They claimed that Mr Hardern's eccentric behaviour had damaged their campaign.

"Michael was a loose canon that shot us in the foot," said Mr Martin. "His U-turn destroyed our credibility and at that point people weren't able to trust us to carry out our mandate."

Students have promised to fight to preserve free tuition, but university vice-chancellors welcomed the move as the only way to preserve the quality of higher education and to allow for expansion.

Mr Blunkett told MPs the Government was offering a new deal for higher education

Students face £10,000 debt under Labour grant plans

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

MOST students will leave university with debts of more than £10,000 as a result of the Government's announcement yesterday that it is to scrap maintenance grants and to introduce fees for full-time university courses.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, said the changes were necessary to provide more money for a university system that he described as being in crisis. But his announcement overruled a key element of a review by Sir Ron Dearing published yesterday, provoked a furious reaction from Labour traditionalists.

Lord Glenamara, a former Labour Education Secretary, said he was ashamed of the proposals, which would act as a barrier to young working-class people. "I do not know whether I can remain in a party and support a Government prepared to do this to its own people," he added.

Left-wing MPs accused ministers of betraying the poor and of destroying a system from which they had themselves benefited. Dennis Canavan, MP for Falkirk West, said: "How can they even contemplate kicking away the ladder of opportunity from so many students?"

Students have promised to fight to preserve free tuition, but university vice-chancellors welcomed the move as the only way to preserve the quality of higher education and to allow for expansion.

Mr Blunkett told MPs the Government was offering a new deal for higher education

that would provide urgently needed funding while guaranteeing access for poor students. "Our preferred solution secures equity, access, quality and accountability," he said.

In *The Times* today Mr Blunkett says the Government will guarantee that the savings from abolishing grants are channelled into higher education. A White Paper in the autumn will address Sir Ron's recommendations to raise the standard of teaching.

Stephen Dorrell, Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, accused the Government of "picking the pockets" of low-income students and their families.

Sir Ron, who recommends the retention of grants alongside annual fees of £1,000 to be paid by all students, refused to condemn the decision.

Details, analysis, pages 12, 13
David Blunkett, page 20
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"Get the champagne - Christopher's been sent down from university"

High street boom

High street sales hit a new high in June as consumers rushed to spend their windfall payouts. Page 25

Hague clean-up brings ban on foreign funding

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

A BAN on foreign donations and new disciplinary powers to expel or suspend MPs or councillors guilty of gross misconduct were promised by William Hague yesterday as part of the biggest shake-up in the Conservative Party for more than half a century.

The Tory leader preempted Labour plans to outlaw political donations from abroad as he acted to remove the taint of sleaze from his party and spoke of his desire to turn the Tories into a "fresh, open, outgoing and clean" organisation. All the big contributions, likely to be set at a ceiling of £5,000, will be declared and the donor named - again in line with Labour plans.

Last night, Tory sources said the ban on foreign donations would apply to any individual "who had no connections whatsoever with Britain." In theory individuals who are not entitled to vote in British elections (apart from Lords) would not be able to donate. But the position of companies is less clear. The sources emphasised that the

detail would have to be worked out in consultation with lawyers but it is likely that companies with any British connection would still be able to donate.

In a radical reshaping of current structures, the three wings of the party, the National Union which runs the voluntary side, Central Office and the parliamentary party are to be brought together into a single organisation governed by a new constitution, which should be ready by April.

A new governing body similar to a board of directors will run the party, with a chairman appointed by the leader, and representatives from the constituencies, Parliament and professional bodies.

It will mean that the party machine is put under central control for the first time. There will be a national membership system to enable the party to keep in touch with its members and enable them to be consulted across a wide range of issues. "Our current organisation is not up to the job," Mr Hague said. Party mem-

bers are to be given a say over policy and the election of leaders for the first time. Mr Hague intends to follow Tony Blair in putting the entire Conservative programme to the membership before the next election.

As expected he is to submit both himself and the outlines of his reforms to a vote of the party in September.

Because the new membership system will not be in place by then, constituency associations will be responsible for distributing ballot papers to their known members and collecting them. The results will be declared at the party conference in October.

By announcing the ban on foreign donations - stopping people not entitled to vote in British elections from being in a position to have influence on its outcome - Mr Hague was acting before he was forced to do so by the Government. Claims that the party has been getting big sums from abroad Continued on page 2, col 4

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Work on wreckage salvaged

By MARK HENDERSON

THE Government has agreed to lift its ban on salvage work on the wreck of the 18th-century packet ship *Hanover* after hearing that it is deteriorating rapidly.

Last week Tony Banks, Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, stopped work on the wreck, which sank in 1763 to the loss of 60 lives off Cligga Head, near Penzance in Cornwall.

The salvage company Hydralive UK Ltd obtained an emergency High Court injunction against the Ministry on Tuesday allowing divers to survey the damage.

The company's solicitor Patricia Frances said: "My clients have been labelled as treasure hunters, but they are professional salvagers."

The work resumes today under two marine archaeologists appointed by the Government. A spokesman for the department said the wreck had been issued because it had not obtained full details of its historical significance.

Another Holocaust bank list on way

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA AND STEPHEN FARRELL

ANOTHER list of about 20,000 dormant pre-war accounts is to be published by the Swiss Bankers' Association in October, continuing what one Swiss newspaper yesterday dubbed "an historic striptease" to return the unclaimed assets of Holocaust victims.

The list of 1,872 non-Swiss names, published in *The Times* and other newspapers worldwide yesterday, as well as on the Internet, is the product of the banks' own search. A hotline set up to handle inquiries was besieged yesterday by Holocaust survivors and claimants.

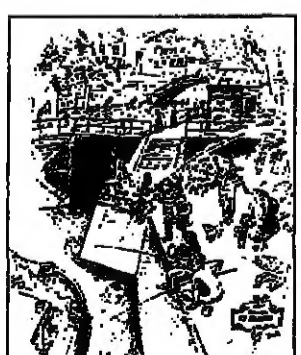
Greville Janner, chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust which pressed the banks to release details, said: "The telephone has not stopped ringing for a second ... it will create an appalling workload for the banks."

Among the Britons planning to apply is Fiona Goetz, widow of Walter Goetz, the *Punch* and *Daily Express* cartoonist and art collector, who died in 1995 aged 83.

Among the first list, nearly half of the account holders

lived in France and Germany. Claimants have six months to come forward and are told to expect a response within six months.

New foreign names uncovered within the next months will be added to October's list, which will mainly be composed of unclaimed deposits belonging to Swiss citizens. Banks believe that some may have helped out friends or relatives unable to leave Nazi Germany and occupied Europe. "Although it could Continued on page 2, col 5



A cartoon for *Punch* in 1953 by Walter Goetz

SAS Bosnia raid was called off

By MICHAEL BINTON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE two Bosnian war criminals suspected that the SAS attempted to arrest on July 10 had been warned that they were wanted by an earlier British-led operation to seize them which was aborted at the last minute.

The *Times* has learnt that a snatch plan in March was cancelled because Nato and Britain's Conservative government did not want a shoot-out with armed Bosnian Serb bodyguards. Three days later John Major called a general election.

The operation was thrown into doubt because the Bosnian Serbs were able to intercept the telephone conversation of international war crimes investigators with the criminal tribunal in The Hague.

Three days of delays in authorising the operation also meant that the suspects knew that they were likely targets. They therefore had armed guards around them, giving the British no chance to pick them up.

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Unionists reject plan for IRA weapons

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

ULSTER Unionists threw the peace process into disarray last night by voting down the Anglo-Irish plan for IRA disarmament. London and Dublin immediately announced that full-scale peace negotiations to develop a new political settlement for Northern Ireland would begin as scheduled on September 15. "We will hold to that and will take all necessary steps to ensure it happens," they said in a joint statement.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and Ray Burke, the Irish Foreign Minister, will meet next Tuesday to discuss ways to overcome the impasse over decommissioning, and will continue talking to all the parties.

Dr Mowlam praised the Ulster Unionist Party for staying in the talks even though it voted against the disarmament plan. "We want these negotiations to be as inclusive as possible," she said.

However, Dr Mowlam condemned Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and Robert McCartney's UK Unionist Party for their decision to quit the peace process. That was, she said, no way to represent their electorates and they should stand and argue their case.

The peace process now enters uncharted territory, with the two governments evidently hoping that the political climate will change over the next few weeks. They will swiftly establish an international body to oversee terrorist disarmament. The IRA ceasefire will have more time to take root. UUP leaders plan to consult widely over the summer and could find greater-than-expected support for negotiating with Sinn Féin.

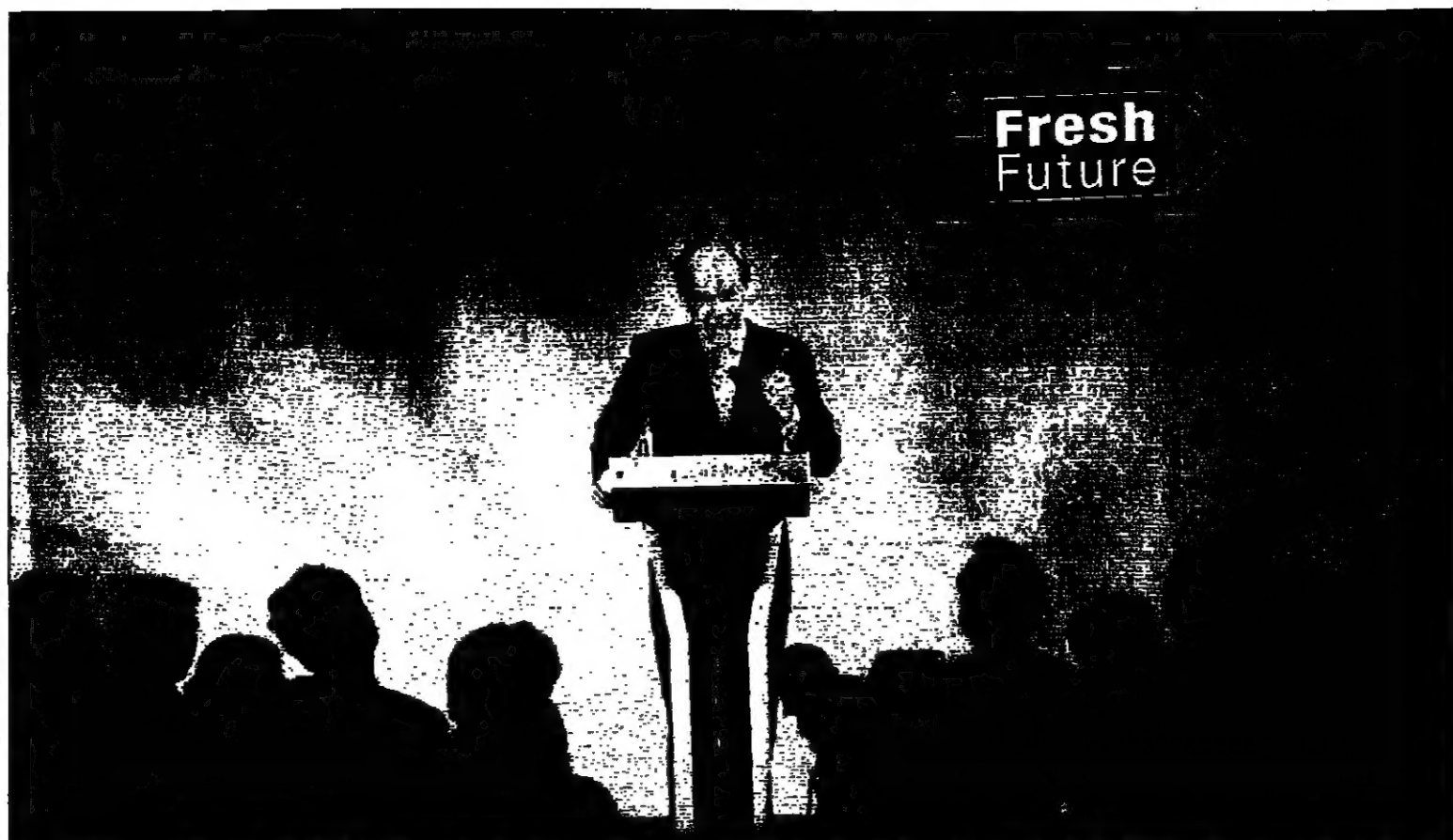
The Unionist parties voted down the disarmament plan because it contained no cast-iron guarantee that IRA disarmament would occur during the peace negotiations. Dr Mowlam insisted the governments were more serious than the Unionists about securing disarmament because the plan, which envisaged disarmament taking place as trust developed, was the only realistic way of achieving it.

One possible solution if the impasse cannot be broken by September 15 is that the governments will embark on "proximity talks", whereby they would act as intermediaries between the UUP and Sinn Féin. Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, announced his party was quitting the peace process after helping to defeat the governments' "blueprint for surrender to the IRA" because there was "nothing in this process for the Union or its people".

David Trimble, the UUP leader, has bought time by promising to continue the search for a resolution, but his position is politically precarious. He does not want to appear an enemy of peace, but risks getting too far ahead of Unionist opinion. Mr Paisley last night demanded the UUP follow his own party's example and abandon the peace process. Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party, said the defeat of the governments' plan was a major setback, but added: "All major setbacks can be followed by major breakthroughs if the will is there."



Mowlam: condemned Paisley's stance



William Hague makes his address. Spin doctors spoke of him "looking serious but with a smile playing around his mouth and eyes"

Big Chief Bald Eagle loses to the sheriff

TOURISTS in the new towns of the American Midwest used to witness a touching sight: Red Indian chiefs, wandering the sidewalks in their feathers, unrevered in an alien world. Down on the Reservation they were masters of all they surveyed. But here feathers drooped and bearing faltered. The contrast between scenes was poignant.

Journalists yesterday witnessed both. We saw Big Chief Bald Eagle, the young warrior recently anointed leader of the Tory tribe, down on the Reservation at Smith Square, spiritual homeland of his people. Here a tent filled with warriors and elders was held spellbound, the womenfolk ululating, the senior members of the tribe growling "kyah-ya-ya-yah" in the traditional manner.

And we saw him in the big new settlement of the Palefaces, known as Fort Blair or "the Houses of Parliament": lands seized from his tribe, where his writ no longer runs. He tried to speak; he made a powerful case; but Sheriff Blair kicked dust in his face. The Palefaces laughed, and few of the journalists bothered to write any of it down. His tribesmen, gathered behind, raised a plucky whoop, but they were hopelessly out-



numbered. At Central Office William Hague had made a substantial speech outlining his plans for a reorganisation of the Tribe. He argued these with intelligence and conviction.

The spin doctors' press release accompanying Hague's new photo-portrait promises a man "looking serious but with a smile playing around his mouth and eyes". Wonder-

ing where else a smile might play, we heard some commonsense delivered with humour in that pleasant but determined tone which is becoming his hallmark.

Hague's call for openness, intellectual freedom and a "welcome to diversity" struck notes unfamiliar in Tory wigwags, but was well-received. With a diplomacy which did him credit, Mr Hague told his

party they were nearly all much too old. Crutches banged against zimmerframes in approval.

Tories must start to listen, he said. He would. He would be listening all summer long. Members, too, must listen. Listen at work, listen at play, listen at home, listen on land and at sea, listen down the pit and in the leafy lanes. The rhetoric began to go rather to his head. The list of places where Tories must listen lengthened. A nightmare vision grew of a Britain in which wherever we go we find Tories — in the hedgerow,

behind the soft-toiletries or under the bed — listening.

After a standing ovation, the new party chairman thanked him. Lord Parkinson is looking quite rejuvenated now he is in charge. He moves his silver-coiffed head with the sort of jerky motion we used to observe in *Thurberbirds* puppets, and looks rather like Parker the chauffeur — young Hague his Lady Penelope. Both chiefs were cheered a second time.

So it was said to see Bald Eagle in the Commons chamber. Here he wanted to know why the Prime Minister had said last week that a Welsh Assembly would control the police, and this week that it would not. Sheriff Blair speak with forked tongue, and four times failed to answer Hague's question — but nobody seemed to notice.

Then Barry Jones (Lab, Alyn & Deeside) asked for an assurance on the Future Large Aircraft, and received one on Airbus — but nobody seemed to notice. This Commons is becoming an Orwellian world in which answers do not relate to questions, nobody says so, and everyone wonders whether he is mad, or everyone else is. A smile played around Tony Blair's lips, but not his eyes.

Leading article, page 21

Hague plans party shake-up

Continued from page 1

have been rife for years. Before the election it was revealed that the party had received large donations from wealthy businessmen in Hong Kong, including one who gave £500,000, and in the past it was embroiled in controversy over accepting £440,000 from Asil Nadir, the Cypriot businessman who fled Britain after his Polly Peck group failed. Mr Hague said the party must be more open about its funds. "In not being so in the past, we have often appeared

secretive and defensive, and we have paid a political price for that."

He announced the establishment of a new internal disciplinary committee, with powers to suspend individuals, councillors or even MPs "or anyone else who through gross misconduct bring scorn on the whole of our party."

He said the rules would be drafted so as not to undermine the role of constituencies to select their own candidates "in all normal circumstances" but the aim is clearly to avoid a

repeat of the situation before the election where the national leadership wanted Neil Hamilton to stand down and his local party refused.

Although some of the reforms will be controversial locally, and there were signs of concern about deterring would-be donors, Mr Hague will get his way on his broad plans. He suggested the ballot next month would be an opportunity to "back me or sack me".

Rights for part-time workers endorsed

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

THE EU law giving up to six million British part-time workers the same rights to sick leave and paid holidays as their full-time colleagues was endorsed yesterday by the Brussels Commission.

The draft directive, which will go to EU ministers for final approval in the autumn, is being enacted under the Social Chapter, the framework for employment law that the Government agreed to join last month.

Under a House of Lords ruling in 1994, British part-time workers are guaranteed the same rights over unfair dismissal and redundancy as full-timers, but an estimated 60 per cent do not enjoy paid sick leave, holiday pay, occupational pensions, share options and other benefits. One in three employees will be working part time by 2001, according to Government estimates.

The TUC says that the cost will amount to 0.5 per cent of the total pay bill. A British official yesterday welcomed the new draft law but said that it would have a very small impact in Britain where part-time workers already had statutory rights.

Taxpayer faces bill in Danish bank fraud case

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A MARATHON civil fraud case ended yesterday in a £90 million High Court victory for a Danish bank and the prospect of a multimillion pound bill for the British taxpayer in legal aid costs.

The question of who pays legal fees run up in the action brought by Jyske Bank, the fourth largest bank in Denmark, against 32 corporate and individual defendants has yet to be decided, and lawyers' bills have not been assessed.

Seven people were granted legal aid for their defence. Anyone bringing or defending legal proceedings in the English courts can obtain legal aid provided that they meet criteria on income and assets and the "merits" test which looks at the case itself.

One defendant granted legal aid was Jan Henning Spjeldnaes, former managing director of the bank's Gibraltar subsidiary, who was yesterday found to have defrauded it of £56.23 million, of which £46 million remains unrecovered. When interest is added, his final liability to the bank is likely to be at least £90 million.

Another was Michael Metcalf, an accessory to the fraud, whose share of joint liability

with Mr Spjeldnaes is expected to run to £82 million when final judgment is given later this year.

In a summary after an 87-day hearing spread over more than a year, Mr Justice Evans-Lombe said that in a period of two years from February 1989 Jyske Bank (Gibraltar) Ltd was procured to enter into 16 transactions, all but one of which were loans to corporate borrowers in which Mr Spjeldnaes had a personal interest. Most of the money was used for property development in Spain, the North of England and Eire, and trading operations in Africa.

One of Mr Spjeldnaes's principal associates, Rolf Jacobsen, had not contested the case. The remainder of the hearing was concerned with whether the bank could establish a case against Pablo Zoltan-Frank, another associate of Mr Spjeldnaes; Julia Gould, wife of Mr Metcalf, and Wolfgang Heint, an Ireland-based commercial agent alleged to have assisted in the dispersal of the bank's money. The judge found the allegations were made out against Mr Jacobsen (£5.1 million plus interest) and Mr Heint (£4.5 million plus interest).

Swiss bank chief tells of shame

Continued from page 1

he argued that these extraordinary measures should have been taken earlier, it's important to keep in mind that no country has laws that oblige banks to actively search for the owners of dormant accounts," said Georg Krayner, chairman of the Swiss Bankers' Association.

He admitted, however, that he was ashamed when he saw that some of the names of groups or companies could easily have been traced. The listed accounts are worth \$760.2 million (£243 million), 50 per cent more than previously admitted. Most of this change was down to the

list but so were her late husband's parents, Alfred and Berthe Goetz.

She said: "My mother-in-law died only two or three years after we married, and never mentioned a thing. This is something that should have been dealt with long ago, when it would have affected people very much more."

Greville Janzer urged the Swiss to speed the process of checking claims. "Never in the history of banking has so much been owed by so few to so many. It is billions. The Swiss say it will take a year. I do not accept that."

The Internet address is: <http://www.dormantaccounts.ch>

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Railtrack attacked over cash

Rail campaigners and crash victims are threatening to disrupt the formality of Railtrack's annual general meeting today by pleading for compensation running into millions. Passengers and other casualties who suffered physical, financial and psychological problems after accidents plan to descend on the London meeting to confront the Railtrack board.

Nearly 100 people were injured and two killed in three accidents within a year. Railtrack said the process for claiming compensation was not the company's responsibility, and insisted it had no liability in accidents at Stafford and Watford.

Blair tells rebels not to go public

Tony Blair warned Labour backbenchers not to use the media if they disagreed with him on policy or party reform. His end-of-term address to MPs stressed the importance of party discipline in winning a second term. Differences of opinion must be expressed in a way "that does credit rather than harm to the party and in no way jeopardises our electoral prospects".

Scots face 'loss of world news'

Television viewers in Scotland may be deprived of important international news stories if a "Tartan" News at Ten is given the go-ahead, the head of ITN warned yesterday. Richard Tait, ITN's editor-in-chief, said there was a danger that much international coverage might have to be sacrificed to facilitate a Scottish version of Britain's most popular news programme.

Fourth jail for Isle of Wight

A fourth jail is planned for the Isle of Wight as the Prison Service faces an inmate population estimated to rise from the current 62,000 to 70,000 by next spring. The service yesterday unveiled proposals to erect prefabricated wooden huts for 400 inmates on farmland near Parkhurst jail near Newport. Eight separate blocks would each contain 52 low-risk inmates.

Blair breaks tradition

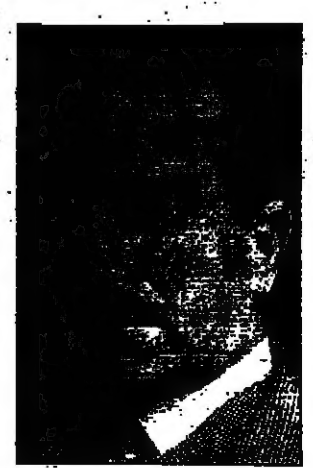
Tony Blair is to defy a long-standing convention by campaigning in Uxbridge on Friday for the forthcoming by-election. Mr Blair will be the first Prime Minister who has visited a by-election campaign for more than 18 years. The unspoken understanding is that the Prime Minister would be more directly blamed if his or her candidate failed to win. The vote is on July 31.

BSE cases fall by 70% in two years

The number of cattle dying of "mad cow" disease has fallen by 70 per cent over the past two years, reinforcing forecasts that it will peter out around the turn of the century. In the first six months of this year, there were 1,716 cases of BSE, 56 per cent fewer than in the same period of 1996 and 70 per cent down on the first half of 1995, Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, said.

BT chocolates man loses case

A BT executive who was accused of harassment after he gave a box of chocolates to a woman colleague lost his sex discrimination claim. Tony Manning, 37, of Great Blakenham near Ipswich, Suffolk, was transferred to another BT job. An industrial tribunal at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, ruled that BT had no case to answer and dismissed his case.



Goetz: his name appears on list

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Hamas attack will not ruin our trip, say Britons

Christopher Walker in Jerusalem finds teenagers determined to go on

SHAKEN, shocked and bloodied in the type of horrific terrorist incident to which Israelis have become all too accustomed, 41 British Jewish teenagers vowed yesterday to continue their month-long educational tour which began with a ruthless attack on the streets of Old Jaffa.

Graham Kogan, 16, from the London suburb of Redbridge, described the sheer terror as the group was picked as a target by an Israeli Arab supporter of Hamas who first drove his red Mitsubishi straight at them at 80mph and then hatched out left and right at those knocked to the floor with a samurai sword and combat knife.

"For the rest of my life I shall never forget the moment that the attacker came straight towards us swinging the sword. For some reason I do not understand, something made me go towards him, but luckily he was wrestled to the ground and I was not hurt," said Graham, speaking at the Tel Aviv hostel where the British party was visited by psychologists organised by The Jewish Agency.

Ten of the British teenagers were lightly wounded in the attack, but all the young men and women from London and Manchester will carry the emotional scars of the first

night out in Israel of the "Federation of Zionist Youth Group Number 4" which had landed at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport only hours before.

The attacker was shouting in Arabic but I could not understand what he was saying. It was too frightening to think too clearly," Graham said. "All I know that anyone who would deliberately accelerate his car into a crowd of innocent teenagers has to be mad to some degree."

Like the other members of the group, which the Israeli authorities hope includes British Jews willing to emigrate to Israel permanently, Graham Kogan, who has just completed GCSEs, was able to speak to his parents at a special incident room established by the Jewish Agency.

"They were terrific. They told me I could make up my own mind whether to go ahead," he added. He said that in the immediate aftermath of the attack, there were those anxious to go straight home, but the mood had changed by yesterday morning, when the whole party left for the Red Sea resort of Eilat by coach.

"I have learnt a great deal in the past 24 hours. You read that things like this can happen in Israel, but it is just so different, so terrifying, when



Nader Abu Rabieh under guard in hospital yesterday

you are in the middle of an attack where somebody seems out to kill you and all of those with you," he said.

Under police interrogation yesterday the attacker, Nazareth-born Nader Abu Rabieh, aged in his early thirties, admitted that the car, sword and knife attack on the British

group and some Canadians sitting in a nearby restaurant had been launched for "nationalistic reasons". Abu Rabieh, reported to have connections with Hamas, said he had been angered by recent Jewish posters depicting the Prophet Muhammad as a pig. Western intelligence ex-

perts expect the posters, drawn by a Jewish extremist from the former Soviet Union now undergoing psychiatric tests, could provoke many more random attacks like that in Old Jaffa. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad have vowed revenge for the posters which depict the pig stomping on the Koran and in the Islamic world, there have been angry demonstrations as far afield as Iran and Bangladesh.

Jonathan Landsman, 21, from Northwood in north London, the British organiser of the group, praised the courage of the teenagers as the attacker flailed his sword having shouted the Muslim war cry Allah Akbar (God is Great) as he jumped from his wrecked car. He had just left the Mahmoudiya mosque when the attack was launched just after 9pm.

"The whole thing happened so quickly it was difficult for me to have any immediate thoughts beyond looking after my kids, especially those who were injured," Mr Landsman said. "The car just drove straight into them and many were left lying on the ground screaming. Then the driver went on the attack with some sort of sword that he was swinging about."

The attacker was last night in an Israeli hospital suffering from a ruptured spleen after being wrestled to the ground by an off duty policeman and hit with a metal pipe by the owner of nearby kiosk.



Jennifer Martin, one of the British teenagers, in a Tel Aviv youth hostel yesterday

Death-pact survivor can keep her lover's £50,000

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A WOMAN who survived a suicide pact made with her lover won a £50,000 payout from his estate yesterday. In the first case of its kind, the Court of Appeal ruled that Nanette Plant was more deserving of sympathy than punishment, although guilty of "criminal complicity" in the suicide of Tony Dunbar.

By two to one, the judges agreed to waive the normal rule that forbids criminals from benefiting from their own wrongdoing, and upheld Miss Plant's right to the full value of the couple's former home and a payout under his life assurance, together totalling about £50,000.

Mr Dunbar's father John, of Sale, Cheshire, had said that she should not have a penny as she had aided and abetted his son's suicide. Under the

Suicide Act 1961 suicide is not a crime, but it is an offence to aid, abet, counsel or procure the suicide of another.

Giving guidance for future cases, Lord Justice Phillips said the survivor of a suicide pact would "normally attract sympathy rather than prosecution". Miss Plant and Mr Dunbar fell in love in 1987, and bought a home in Preston, Lancashire. They got engaged at Christmas 1989, but in January 1991 Miss Plant fell under suspicion of false accounting in her job as administration controller at Blackpool's Savoy Hotel.

Fearing she would soon be arrested, she told her lover that she intended to take her own life. Mr Dunbar, 24, could not face life without her. The couple first tried to gas themselves in their car before

deciding to hang themselves from the rafters in their attic. Miss Plant's noose came loose and she survived. She said she tried to finish her life by cutting her throat and wrists with a kitchen knife and jumping from a bedroom window, but again survived.

Miss Plant, who now lives in Bedhill, Sussex, was later convicted of false accounting and, on May 8 1992, was given a nine-month suspended prison sentence. Lord Justice Phillips said that although she had been guilty of a criminal offence in the suicide, her "degree of culpability" had been so low that strict enforcement of the terms of the Forfeiture Act would not be in the public interest. In a pact "the survivor will normally attract sympathy rather than prosecution".

Boy saves father after adder bite

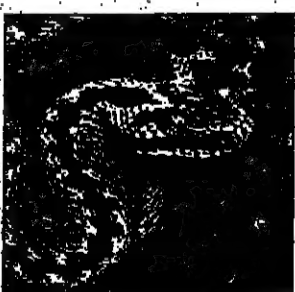
By A STAFF REPORTER

A SCHOOLBOY was praised yesterday for saving his father's life after he was bitten by an adder during a sailing holiday. Joe Palmer, 12, called the emergency services on his mobile telephone after his father collapsed with breathing difficulties, and guided a lifeboat to their yacht.

A severe reaction to the snake poison made Ian Palmer's throat begin to close and he lapsed in and out of consciousness. But thanks to his son's prompt call a lifeboat and rescue helicopter arrived within minutes, and Mr Palmer was flown to hospital.

He was in intensive care yesterday but his condition was said to be improving after treatment with venom antidote.

Mr Palmer, 34, and his son had noticed the adder asleep in their path as they walked beside the River Crouch in Essex. Mr Palmer bent to move it and was bitten twice on the finger and thumb. They returned to their yacht and set sail to seek help in Burnham, four miles away.



Adder: summer hazard

but Mr Palmer quickly started to vomit and to lose consciousness.

Joe, from Charlton, south-east London, said: "Dad immediately sucked out the poison and spat it away. His lips and throat began to swell up and his hand was the size of a balloon. When we finally got to the boat he collapsed."

A Thames coastguard spokesman said: "The boy was extremely sensible and helped to save his father. He stayed calm throughout and assisted the lifeboat crew when they arrived. He knew he had to keep his father's airway open because his throat was closing quickly."

Son fixated on models hit parents

By A STAFF REPORTER

A YOUTH aged 18 was so obsessed with the model Claudia Schiffer and Eva Herzigova that he attacked his parents when they suggested his interest had got out of hand.

Philip Wright, who changed his name to Herzogova-Schiffer, was given a 12-month suspended sentence by magistrates at Newquay, Cornwall, after he admitted causing actual bodily harm and criminal damage. Grace Wright, his mother, was forced to flee the family home in St Columb Minor, Cornwall, after her son began punching her when she got some questions about Miss Schiffer wrong.

Wright later had an argument with his father, Brian, when he announced he was changing his name by deed poll. He punched his father in the head, threw him on to a sofa and bit him on his ear. He then threatened to kill him with a knife and kicked in the family's video.

Mr Wright said after the case that his son had learnt his lesson and that he had bought his parents a "sorry" card.

Winner turns down world

A CARETAKER was told the world was his oyster when he won a £10,000 holiday prize. But instead of the Bahamas, Bali or the Barrier Reef, Dennis Isaacs picked the Highlands, Guernsey and Bournemouth.

Last night, as the British tourist industry celebrated a new hero, Mr Isaacs, 71, from King's Lynn, Norfolk, said: "I prefer not to get into the hassle of travelling abroad."

He was given £10,000 to holiday anywhere in the world

by Barclays Bank after entering a competition when he took out a car loan. Winners invariably choose to go abroad. Mr Isaacs, whose wife Kathleen is 80, has never been further afield than France and does not plan to change now.

"A holiday is all about relaxing," he said. "We're going on a coach tour of the Highlands because I can see the sights without driving. I like the look of Guernsey. And we've been to Bournemouth before and we've chosen there

because I can go fishing. There's an awful lot of Britain I haven't seen."

Bournemouth's public relations officer, Liz Mickelthwaite, said: "Sensible man. There is virtually everything in Bournemouth."

OUR 3 YEAR PEACE OF MIND PACKAGE HAS JUST GOT BETTER.

By having a sale we're putting the icing on the cake. Every new Daewoo still comes with the following as standard:

- 1) 3 year/60,000 mile free servicing including parts and labour.
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- 3) 3 year/60,000 mile comprehensive warranty.
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can also choose one from any of the following offers (written details available on request):

- SALE 1) £500 worth of fuel vouchers.
- SALE 2) £500 cashback.
- SALE 3) Choice of up to £750 worth of Daewoo electronic products.
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But now, as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations, every private customer purchasing a new Daewoo can also choose one from any of the following offers (written details available on request):

Daewoo's best prices, including delivery and 12 months road tax, start from just £2,995. To find out where your nearest store is, call us on 0800 646 722.

SALE OFFERS AND 3 YEARS PEACE OF MIND? THAT'LL BE THE DAEWOO

ARM YOURSELF WITH THE FACTS IF YOU WANT A GREAT PENSION

OFT urges radical pensions overhaul

By SARA MCCONNELL

THE Office of Fair Trading called for a radical overhaul of pension provision in Britain yesterday, condemning the present system as expensive and inadequate. Publishing the findings of a ten-month inquiry, John

equal annuity rates for men and women and removal of the penalties levied by some providers on people who take their pension funds elsewhere to get a better annuity rate. But it held back from recommending that people be com-

The Times 16th July 1997

Have you read all the hype about pensions following the Office of Fair Trading's report? Would you prefer some simple facts?

After all, if you want to buy a pension now, you have to choose from what is available today - not what might be available in the future. Nor should you think that delay is an option. Remember that every five years you put off starting contributions could cut your pension in half.

Good value and flexibility are available already - if you know where to look.

As The Times' City Editor, commenting on the Director General of Fair Trading's approach in the report, wrote in the newspaper on 16th July 1997, "Now, when faced with high charges by pension providers, he reckons competition will sort this out. But there are nearly 200 life companies and if the market was so efficient everyone would have a pension with Equitable Life."

Of course, current plans, working practices and legislation don't match the OFT's ideal pension. Some pensions though, are more ideal than others.

So, how does an Equitable pension measure up to the OFT recommendations?

The table opposite gives all nine features asked for by the OFT - in full and in their own words. By each is our response.

| OFT RECOMMENDATION | THE EQUITABLE'S POSITION |
|---|---|
| 1. Passive fund management Tracker funds offer better and cheaper financial performance... | We offer a tracker fund - and 15 other funds at the same price. |
| 2. Systematic reduction of investment risk. | You have a choice of a range of funds to manage your investment risk as you approach retirement, or you can leave the investment management to us with our market-leading with-profits fund. |
| 3. An annuity purchased on the open market without penalty. | You can use your Equitable fund to purchase an annuity from the provider of your choice; without penalty. |
| 4. An annuity which is fully index linked. | You can choose a fully index linked annuity with the Equitable if you wish. |
| 5. Equal annuity rates for men and women. | No - not generally available at present. |
| 6. Expenses as a fixed proportion of fund value with no hidden element. | Yes. If you have a pension plan for just one year, you only get charged for one year. A new job is, therefore, a new opportunity not a pension problem. |
| 7. A suitable structure to allow economies of scale. | Our mutual status means we do business at cost. There are no shareholders to take a slice of the profits. And our no commission stance brings further savings. In fact The Equitable has the lowest ratio of expenses to premium income of all life companies in the UK.** |
| 8. An entitlement for an employee, on becoming eligible to join an occupational scheme, to receive in lieu a contribution from the employer. | An Equitable personal pension can already accommodate voluntary contributions from employers. Compulsory contributions would require government legislation. |
| 9. Unbiased and objective recommendations on the level of contribution needed for consumers of different ages and with different levels of accumulated savings. | Just ask us and we'll give you the advice you need. |

After reading them take a look at some other advertisements and judge for yourself which company gives you straight talking.

Perhaps that's why independent surveys, using a rating method recommended by the OFT, placed The Equitable's regular contribution plan at the top for both low charges and high performance.*

And one final note. There have been changes and improvements to our pension over the years but fundamentally it is the same plan we introduced in 1956 - the first year they were allowed by law. Funny old world.

If you would like some plain facts about our personal pension plan by post and by telephone call 0990 38 48 58. Alternatively complete and return the coupon.

INFORMATION/ADVICE WILL ONLY BE GIVEN ON EQUITABLE GROUP PRODUCTS REGULATED BY THE PERSONAL INVESTMENT AUTHORITY THE EQUITABLE LIFE, FREEPOST, WALTON STREET, AYLESBURY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HP21 7BR

To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 7BR.

I would welcome details on The Equitable's pension plans.

I am self employed ☐
I am an employee not in a company pension scheme ☐

TMCW7A

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Miss) _____

ADDRESS _____

Postcode _____

Tel: (Office) _____

Tel: (Home) _____

Date of Birth _____

* The Independent October 1996

** Planned Savings October 1996

We guarantee that no company outside The Equitable and its subsidiaries will receive these details. If, however, you would prefer to receive no further information from us, please tick this box ☐



The Equitable Life
You profit from our principles

British climbers fall to deaths in French Alps

TWO British climbers fell 3,000 ft to their deaths while posing for photographs on a ridge on Mont Blanc in the French Alps, Clare Kempster, 31, apparently lost her footing when she made a lunge for her rucksack and dragged her companion, Mark Haseler, 39, from West Dulwich, south London, into a ravine.

A third climber on the expedition had untied himself to take the pictures on a section of the mountain called the Aiguille de Bionassay, and saw them fall.

French police said that Miss Kempster's rucksack slipped from the ledge. Marc Dubrulle, of the Chamonix mountain police, said: "They reached a ridge, with Italy on one side and France on the other, where there is a very beautiful view, and they apparently decided to get a photograph of themselves with the view in the background."

"One of them released himself from the rope, and the other two stepped back for the photo. At this point, the woman lost her rucksack and it started sliding down the slope. She tried to catch it and fell, pulling the other climber, who was still roped to her."

"It was a foolish action to try to catch the rucksack in a position like that. The mountain is dangerous, but that spot is not particularly perilous."

Pair had stopped to take photos on high ridge, report

Susan Bell

and Adrian Lee

out, and one would think it is better to lose the rucksack."

The bodies of the victims were recovered by helicopter on the Italian side of the mountain. The alarm was raised by the surviving climber and an investigation begun by Italian authorities in Aosta.

The climbers had spent Monday night in a hut just above 10,000 ft. They set off at first light on Tuesday to the summit of the 15,771 ft peak. The accident happened at 7 am.

Mr Haseler lived for climbing, his family said yesterday. "It was his abiding passion," his brother, Tony, 51, of Croydon, south London, said. "I would describe him as a keen amateur but he was very cautious and did not take risks."

Mr Haseler, a former pupil of John Ruskin School, Croydon, worked at St George's Hospital, Tooting, south London, as a computer programmer. His parents, Ernest and Marjorie, were making

arrangements for his body to be flown home.

The expedition had been organised by a club in Ealing, west London, called "Rockhoppers. Eileen O'Sullivan, a friend of Miss Kempster, said she was one of the best climbers in the club. "Most of the men looked up to her because she was so good."

The ascent of Mont Blanc is rated easy and is made by up to 100 climbers a day in summer. A spokesman for the British Mountaineering Council said: "Technically it is a high-altitude walk. It would be suitable for a beginner climbing with someone with some Alpine experience."

"But if someone falls unexpectedly there is often not a lot you can do even if you are roped together."

On average, one climber a week dies in the French Alps. This year there have been fewer fatalities than usual because bad weather has kept many people off the mountain.



Mark Haseler, who died with Clare Kempster

Widow of man killed on Mont Blanc tackles Andes

A WOMAN who survived a climbing accident that killed her husband is to tackle two of the world's most awesome mountains. Pamela Caswell, 43, survived 36 hours in a freezing ravine on Mont Blanc in 1994, after a 200 ft fall in which her husband, Stephen, died.

She and her son Simon, 16, had used Mr Caswell's jacket to keep warm as they lay next to his body, waiting for an Italian rescue team. Mrs Caswell was six weeks pregnant with another son, now aged two. While she is away in the Andes, relations will look after Stephen, named after his father, a geology professor.

Mrs Caswell, a Plymouth teacher, will leave Britain tomorrow as the only woman on an eight-strong expedition. They plan to climb in the Cordillera Central range and hope to become the first British team to conquer one of the peaks that reaches 5,897 metres and the second to scale another peak of 5,730 metres.

Only one British expedition has been to the area, in 1958, and much of the range is unclimbed and unexplored. Mrs Caswell and the other climbers are seeking sponsor-



Pamela Caswell, whose husband died

ship for the expedition, which is costing £1,600 each.

She said: "I never thought of giving up climbing after the accident. If you go on trips like that, you have to put up with the risk of things happening. You would be very naive not to think of them."

"I have carried on climbing right the way through since the accident, but I have been a little limited by having a two-year-old child. Everyone who climbs has fears. It is healthy to be afraid. You cannot go into an expedition being completely blasé, but it is like everything — you don't do it unless you want to. "My husband would have

wanted me to carry on, just as I would have expected him not to give up if it had been the other way round."

"I am looking forward to this expedition. We have received grants from the British Mountaineering Council and the Mount Everest Foundation, but we are still looking for sponsorship."

"It is the second time I have been to the Andes, but this time we are going to an area which has been visited only once by the British. There are a lot of unclimbed peaks of between 4,000 and 6,000 metres, and what we are doing is exploration as well as mountaineering."

Libel case damages for Earl Spencer

EARL SPENCER accepted substantial undisclosed libel damages yesterday over newspaper allegations about his attempts to curb the behaviour of a South African photographer.

The Earl, brother of Diana Princess of Wales, now lives in South Africa along with his estranged wife, Victoria, and four children. He was not at the High Court for the settlement of his actions against *The Guardian* and the *London Evening Standard*. His solicitor, Simon Ekins, told Mr Justice Popplewell that the photographer, Farie Jaxon, had embarked on a "persistent and relentless campaign of intimidation" directed at the whole family.

Deborah Askenhurst, representing Associated Newspapers and *Guardian* Newspapers, unreservedly accepted that there was no truth whatsoever in the defamatory imputations published and sincerely apologised for the embarrassment and distress caused.

They had agreed to pay Lord Spencer substantial damages and his legal costs.

Teenagers in firework arson prank are detained

TWO teenagers who pushed a lit firework through a letterbox, causing a fire that killed a ten-year-old boy, were sentenced to three years' youth custody yesterday.

The death of Dale Mitchell prompted a petition signed by thousands of people demanding tighter restrictions on the sale of fireworks, which was delivered to 10 Downing Street earlier this year.

Jonathan Whitbrook, 18, and Christopher Smith, 17, both of Nottingham, admitted reckless arson. Mr Justice Smedley ordered at Leicester Crown Court that a charge of manslaughter lie on file.

The fire at the Mitchell's three-floor family home last October was started after Smith held a firework display for younger members of his own family. He and Whitbrook were walking to a local shop when Whitbrook put a rocket minus its stick into the letterbox and lit it. The pair then ran off, but a fierce fire developed and Dale's mother was unable to reach him.

Whitbrook had told police: "It was just a prank."

The Times Crossword Championship

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| L | A | R | | A | F | V | H | | | | | | | |
| A | S | S | A | | R | A | I | S | E | C | A | I | N | |
| C | T | | A | V | V | R | I | | C | | | | | |
| K | N | I | G | H | T | A | G | E | S | U | S | H | I | |
| B | N | | | R | | R | | L | | | | | | O |
| U | N | A | I | D | E | D | | S | E | E | S | A | W | |
| N | D | E | | | | | | E | S | | N | | | |
| | J | O | W | E | T | | | C | A | P | A | P | I | E |
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| U | N | C | A | S | | B | A | R | A | T | A | R | I | A |
| B | Y | T | A | | | T | | | | | | | | |
| U | N | C | L | E | A | R | L | Y | G | I | G | L | I | |
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| N | U | D | I | S | T | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | T | E | N | N | Y | S | O | N |

The solution to the qualifying puzzle for this year's Crossword Championship appears above. A brief guide to clarify each of the clues is also given.

The championship will be a single session event on Sunday August 24 at the Royal Festival Hall between 3pm and 6.30pm.

ACROSS: 1 ouch; in Babe; 5 two meanings; 10 assault; 11 homophone; 12 anagram; 13 hidden; 14 (noun) (noun) (noun); 16 cryptic definition; 19 "I am Master of this college: What I don't know isn't knowledge" (see: Oxford Dictionary of Quotations); 21 cap-a-pie; 23 (uncast) character in Cooper's

"Last of the Mohicans"; 25 Bar-a-lar-I-a; Sancho Panza's island in "Don Quixote"; 27 "My aged Uncle Arly" (Edward Lear); 28 1 in Giga; 29 1d in sun (rev); 30 NY in tension

DOWN: 1 Blackbird; 2 cryptic definition: 5 u-hair (rev); 4 Cambridge, Massachusetts; 6 cryptic definition: 7 two meanings; 8 nunc-i-vo; 9 five Rs; 15 Manx judges; 17 full name of Gus, the theatre cat (Elliot); 18 eg in nation; 20 T-a bard, name of inn at start of Canterbury pilgrimage; 21 anagram of (unclear); 22 name of "The Deserted Village" (Goldsmith); 24 initial letters: 26 go in tin

145

Quattro Sportivo

TO VIEW THE ALFA 145 TWIN SPARK SEE YOUR NEAREST OUTSIDE LANE.

| Alfa 145 1.6 16V | On the road price | Deposit | Amount of rental | Rent monthly payment | 35 monthly payments | Final payment | MPR % | Charge for credit | Total amount payable |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Example | £12,845.48 | £4,975.15 | £8,870.33 | £254 | £199 | £16,023.53 | 13.4% | £2,595.21 | £16,440.69 |

The car that has overtaken all in its class is undoubtedly the Alfa 145 Twin Spark. Described as the most distinctive 3-door hatchback to be viewed on the road today, with its range of unique 16V Twin Spark engines (1.6, 1.8 and 2.0 litre), it is more powerful and more efficient than ever.

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Hard to believe the on the road price is just £13,845.48 for the 1.6 16V and with Preferenza, Alfa Romeo's personal contract plan, you can drive this car away for only £199 per month* — plus deposit and final payment. When the agreement period finishes either return the car, or make the final payment.

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Police may be charged over man's death

The DPP has admitted making errors and is to review the case, Richard Ford reports

TWO policemen could be charged with manslaughter after the Director of Public Prosecutions admitted yesterday that there had been an error of law in reaching her original view not to charge them.

Dame Barbara Mills, QC, also accepted that a pathologist's evidence available at the time of the original decision could not support the view that Shiji Lapite's death was caused by an accident.

Mr Lapite died after a violent struggle with officers outside a club in Stoke Newington, north London, in December 1994.

The decision not to prosecute Police Constables Paul Wright and Andrew McCallum was taken by Robert Munday, a principal Crown prosecutor, and was approved by senior officials, including Dame Barbara.

The concession by Dame Barbara came as Olamide Jones, the widow of Mr Lapite, started an unprecedented court challenge to the DPP's decision not to charge the officers over his death.

The Police Complaints Authority also accepted at the outset of High Court proceedings that its decision not to



Shiji Lapite, who died, PC Peter Wright, centre, and PC Andrew McCallum



bring disciplinary charges against Constables Wright and McCallum was "flawed and should be quashed", and that there should be another inquiry.

Ms Jones, of Southwark, south London, said in a statement: "I am pleased with the decision but the fight is not over. I hope the police authorities will not continue to protect those responsible for my husband's death and that the CPS will take this opportunity to prosecute the officers involved."

Mr Lapite, a painter and decorator, died aged 34 from asphyxia and cocaine intoxication after being put in a neck

hold as he was leaving the club. He was pinned down by the officers and his larynx was partially crushed. He had up to 45 injuries on his body while the officers were almost unscathed.

At the inquest Constable Wright admitted applying the neck hold and Constable McCallum admitted kicking Mr Lapite twice. They said that the dead man had tried to strangle Constable Wright.

An inquest jury found that Mr Lapite had been unlawfully killed but the CPS decided against bringing charges of manslaughter and the Police Complaints Authority, after

hearing representations from Scotland Yard, did not bring disciplinary charges.

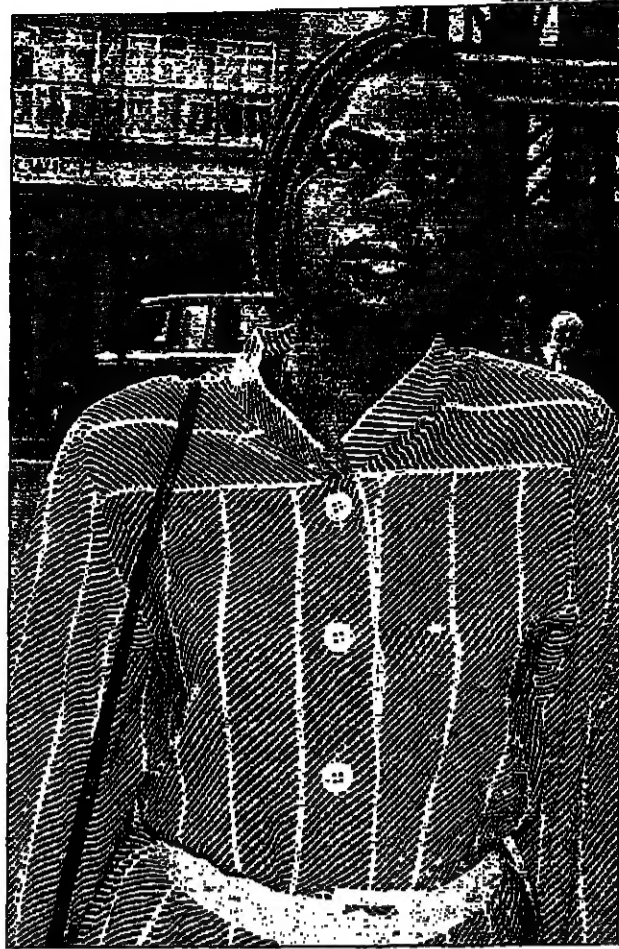
Ben Emmerson, counsel for Ms Jones, told the High Court that Mr Lapite died as a result of "injuries inflicted by PC Wright and PC McCallum while in police custody".

Ms Jones launched an application for judicial review of the decision not to prosecute the officers for manslaughter. She believed that the DPP had made a fundamental error of law by applying the wrong elements of the offence of unlawful act of manslaughter: based on the decision on an analysis of the cause of death

that was unreasonable and untenable on post-mortem evidence: that the evidence of excessive and unlawful force was overwhelming and that it was irrational to conclude otherwise; and that the DPP was under a legal obligation to give reasons for her decision.

Mr Emmerson said that in a recent letter Dame Barbara had agreed to quash her decision because it relied "upon the acceptance of a possibility that the constriction on Mr Lapite's neck that led to his death may have been caused unintentionally by PC Wright's arm having become accidentally entangled in Mr Lapite's clothing, forming a ligature". He said Dame Barbara had been sent a report from the coroner's pathologist which described that theory as "unreasonable and untenable on the post-mortem evidence".

Mr Emmerson told Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Jowitt, said that the director also accepted that an error of law was made when deciding whether there should have been a charge of manslaughter as a result of an unlawful act. The hearing continues.



Olamide Jones, widow of Shiji Lapite, yesterday

NEWS IN BRIEF

Children avenge mother

An man obsessed with his ex-girlfriend was jailed for life at Bristol Crown Court for the murder of Barbara Wallace, 33, who had ended their two-month romance. Enrol Graham, 24, of Horfield, Bristol, was identified by his victim's children, Brady, eight, and Sacha, ten, who heard their mother's screams.

Brady had run to his mother's aid, striking Graham with a metal bar from a table football game, but the man pushed past him. As Ms Wallace lay with a stab wound to the heart, the children raised the alarm by dialling 999 from a call box.

Al Fayed loses

Mohamed Al Fayed, the chairman of Harrods, has lost his attempt to sue Emanuel Naghi, an antiques dealer, who he alleged had sold him forged candelabra in 1986 and 1987. The Court of Appeal ruled that he had taken too long to bring the action.

Mother returns

A baby boy who was left in a telephone box in January at Tameside near Manchester, when he was five days old, was reunited with his young mother yesterday. She had written to social workers saying she wished that she had never let him go.

Obscenity charge

David Kirkland, 42, an accountant at the University of Manchester Institute for Science and Technology, was charged with making obscene telephone calls to boys between April and June. He was remanded on bail by Manchester magistrates.

Sailor's £800 kiss

Royal Navy Warrant Officer Peter Horrocks, 48, was cleared of five sexual harassment charges by a court martial in Portsmouth but fined £800 and given a severe reprimand for kissing a Wren on the neck in "wholly unacceptable behaviour".

Alcopops ban

A new pub has been granted a licence that incorporates a ban on alcopops. Judge Richard Haworth imposed the condition at Kingston Crown Court after an appeal against magistrates' refusal to license The Hogshead at Kingston upon Thames.

Mail logic

The Green Dragon pub in Lovedean, Hampshire, got a letter through its letterbox from the Royal Mail, saying mail could not be put through the letterbox because a parked trailer made it hard to reach. The postman had squeezed in a 10in gap and bent sideways.

Irishman 'killed bogus job racketeer'

FROM ANDREW DRUMMOND IN BANGKOK

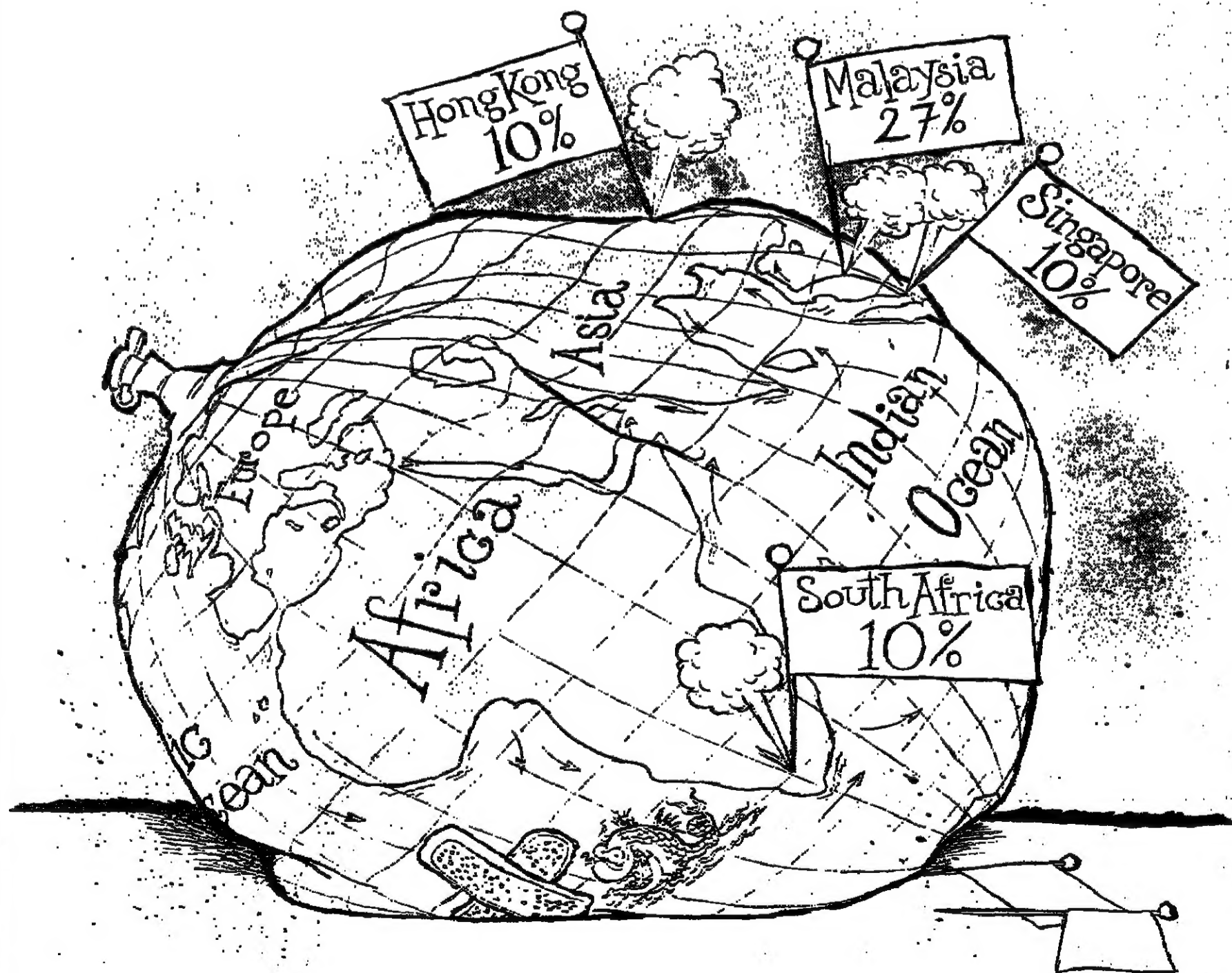
AN IRISHMAN will appear before a court in Thailand today charged with murder. Colin Martin, 36, is said to have taken revenge after claiming he was duped into becoming an agent for a syndicate that took money from redundant British shipyard workers for Far East jobs that did not exist.

Mr Martin, who lives in Thailand, is alleged to have kidnapped the man he blamed for the scheme and stabbed to death another in trying to recover £200,000 lost by British workers.

He was arrested by Thai police at the Bangkok home of Gerry O'Connor, from New Zealand, who was said to have been held at knifepoint. The body of Bret Holdsworth, a New Zealand ship's captain, was found on a roadside near the beach resort of Pattaya.

Mr Martin is alleged to have gone berserk after tracking down the connen who, he said, had tricked dozens of shipyard workers from Clydeside, Barrow-on-Furness, Tyneside, Teesside, Merseyside, and Belfast out of their life savings on a promise of lucrative work on the Pacific island of Guam.

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Hanged Oxford student had tried suicide before

Parents and friend criticise university care, reports Kathryn Knight

AN OXFORD student who hanged herself just weeks before her finals had already attempted suicide twice during her time at the university, an inquest was told yesterday.

Sarah Napuk's parents refused to attend the hearing, and instead issued an open letter warning other families not to send their "vulnerable and sensitive young children" to the "unsafe" environment of Oxford University.

Miss Napuk, 21, a history student, was expected to get a first, and had secured a Kennedy Fellowship at Harvard. She had suffered from depression since the sixth form, and was taking medication when she went to college in 1994.

She received counselling from the university over her problems with the academic workload. Three weeks after her second attempt to take her own life with an overdose, she was found hanging from the wardrobe in her room at Lady Margaret Hall.

A fellow student, Rebecca Tuck, told the Oxford inquest that she was encouraging Miss Napuk to ask to see a different counsellor. She said the woman she was seeing was advising her to leave the university and telling her she could not cope. Miss Napuk "saw herself as having writer's



Sarah Napuk, left, and her friend Rebecca Tuck, who criticised counselling at Oxford University

block and was unable to produce essays, and that culminated in her taking an overdose of seven or eight paracetamol in June 1995.

"This year she seemed to be having more problems. She realised she was going to have to start doing a lot more academic work and realised what gaps she had, particularly from her second year."

At the end of March, Miss Napuk took an overdose of 20 paracetamol. After hospital treatment, she went home to see her family in Edinburgh. "When she came back, she seemed a little bit better. She had drawn up a work schedule but she was having trouble doing any work at all," Miss



Tuck said. "She explained she was having problems with her fiancé, who was having panic attacks. On top of the work, she was unable to cope with this."

The vice-principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Frances Lannon, said that Miss Napuk found it difficult to strike a balance between her work and her outside interests. Dr Lannon, Miss Napuk's moral tutor, said: "Tutors commented on her very obvious ability, but consistently reported she was not working steadily enough. She was very much involved in the organisation of student life, often in ways helpful to other students, but I was anxious

this was too much of her time."

Dr McShane, a psychiatrist at Oxford's Churchill Hospital who attended Miss Napuk after her second overdose, said she had a history of mood swings but had been particularly stressed about her workload. After Miss Napuk hanged herself on April 18, a work schedule drawn up was found on her desk nearby.

Recording a verdict of suicide, the coroner Nicholas Gardiner passed his condolences to Miss Napuk's parents Kerry, 56, American businessman, and Angela. In their letter, the Napuks were critical of the counselling structure at Oxford and claimed to have found flaws in a new system that was said to have strengthened the safety net for students.

After the hearing, Miss Tuck, who has just completed her final exams in law, said Miss Napuk had been let down by the system and not by her own personality.

However, the Reverend Professor Ernest Nicholson, chairman of the university's student health committee, said: "I have to say with great sadness that even with many more counsellors, we could not necessarily have prevented this tragedy."

Childminder jailed for manslaughter

Judge sends warning that working mothers have right to expect exemplary childcare, reports Paul Wilkinson

A CHILDMINDER who killed a four-month-old girl after a momentary loss of patience, was yesterday jailed for five years for manslaughter.

A judge accepted that Angela Lee, 46, who has two children, had an impeccable seven-year record as a childminder before the death of Danielle Firth. But he said that mothers who went to work had a right to expect that "tender little lives" would be protected.

Lee was acquitted of murdering Danielle in February last year but convicted of manslaughter by a jury at Leeds Crown Court. The verdict satisfied Danielle's parents, Barrie and Peira Firth. "We did not believe it was murder, she just snapped," Mr Firth said.

Police said that the parents had taken every possible care in selecting the childminder, who was registered with Kirklees council and had an exemplary record. But Danielle died just ten days after her first visit to Lee's home in Denby Dale, west Yorkshire. The baby had five head injuries, thought to have been caused by being shaken, thrown against a hard surface and prodded or smacked.

Judge Brian Walsh, QC,



Lee gave three different accounts of injuries

told Lee: "It is the practice of many women to return to work when their children are still little. In order that they can do this, people like you qualify as childminders and mothers pay you to care and look after their children."

"Whether babies are occasionally fractious or awkward, whether they take their bottles or not, they are tender little lives. They are entitled to be treated carefully by those who care for them. For some reason, and I accept for a very short time, you lost your patience and self-control, probably while you were trying to feed her, and in frustration you shook her, slapped her

and dropped her." Lee, whose children were aged 12 and 4 at the time of the baby's death, gave three accounts of how the injuries occurred.

First she told police that the baby had fallen from its car seat on to a toy castle, then that she had fallen from her lap as she fed her. In court Lee admitted that she had lied because she feared her registration would be withdrawn, and said that the baby had slipped from her grasp as she stood up to find a tissue. The girl was dead when paramedics arrived.

After the verdict Mr and Mrs Firth called for tighter controls on childminders, including spot checks on their homes. "You cannot just sit back and accept that everything is working smoothly," said Mr Firth, of Barnoldswick, Lancashire. The couple now have a seven-month-old son.

Anne Marie Graham, head of Kirklees Early Years Service, said: "Kirklees has very comprehensive policies covering the registration and training of childminders, over and above national guidelines. But however thorough guidelines may be, it is clearly impossible to legislate for a one-off tragic incident."

Cut costs by keeping the elderly busy, says think-tank

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

CARE for the elderly is in disarray, with old people caught in a game of "pass the parcel" between health and social services, according to the independent think-tank Demos. One solution to the problem of funding services for the aged, it suggests, is to encourage them to take up voluntary work.

This would not only keep them active but provide manpower to keep services running, says a report by Demos. Its chief criticisms are that inefficient financing makes poor use of paid care staff, services are unresponsive and designed for the convenience of the providers and professionals rather than those who need them, and that the system works only because families make huge contributions.

Calling for a seamless system of support for the elderly, based on their needs and preferences, the report says that policies from transport to planning need to be audited to ensure they promote independence.

Educational programmes to keep older people's minds active are needed alongside integrated chiropody, physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes to look after their physical disorders. A single budget bridging health and community care is described as essential.

Demos also suggests setting up energy conservation programmes to keep homes warm and in good repair, cutting the incidence of illness caused by cold and damp.

Overall there should be a robust social network for the elderly. The generation now growing old may prefer video-on-wheels to meals-on-wheels, while the Internet could be used to develop and to maintain community relationships.

"Without radical reform, ageing for Britons in the 21st century will be a wretched business," the report says. "The growing numbers of elderly people will not tolerate that for long."

Holding back the years
(Demos, 9 Brixton Place, London EC4V 6AP; £7.95)



Barrie and Peira Firth, outside court, calling for spot checks on childminders

BT engineers claim unfair sacking

By STEPHEN FARRELL AND GLEN OWEN

TWO BT computer experts who beat 30 million callers to win tickets costing £10 for Concorde flights are to take their employer to an industrial tribunal after being dismissed for allegedly abusing their technical knowledge.

Neville Secular and Dean Perry, who worked in the same office, were sacked after BT admitted security procedures were breached during a British Airways Valentine's Day offer.

Mr Secular, 25, from Orpington, Kent, and Mr Perry, from Essex, were among the first 190 winning callers to a hotline number on February 12. Both were configuration engineers sharing an office at BT's Data Build division in London, which deals with digital switches and software that runs the telephone net-

work. The pair claimed to have dialled the 0345 hotline in the normal way, using the speaking clock and redial buttons on their handsets to synchronise their calls when the lines opened at exactly 10pm.

But telecom experts claimed they could have had access to specialised knowledge enabling them to bypass "call-gapping" mechanisms that filter out many calls at an early stage to avoid overloading the network. Richard Cox, an independent consultant, said: "Data Build are probably the group of people who know most about how the system works."

At first BT insisted the offer was a genuine lottery for all those taking part. However, the pair failed to take their Concorde seats on February 14 and were later dismissed after an internal inquiry.

A BT spokeswoman said yesterday: "We had a full investigation and individuals who abused their position were dismissed. BT has now ensured that in any future promotions there are processes to prevent the repetition of any abuses that occurred on this occasion."

The offer was one of the most oversubscribed ever, with 20 million calls between 9.50pm and 10.15pm for the £5,400 return trip tickets. The airline said last night that it was satisfied with the inquiry. BT is to pay about £20,000 to five charities nominated by BA, including Unicef and schools and orphanages in Ghana and Bangladesh.

The unfair dismissal claims have been lodged at Stratford industrial tribunal, east London. No date has been set.

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| Nat West | 0.25% | 0.25% |
| Midland | 0.25% | 0.25% |

Source: The Research Department Ltd. All financial information is checked for accuracy on a weekly basis.

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makes a
woman
marry a
gangster?

MAGAZINE

Judges offered role in deciding law policy

Deal may end tensions over justice reforms, reports Frances Gibb

LORD Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, last night proposed a new partnership between judges and ministers to give the judiciary input into government policymaking on the justice system and end tensions between them.

He told the judges' annual dinner at the Mansion House: "It is essential that Government be able to speak to the judiciary and the judiciary to Government." The approach would be in marked contrast to that of the previous Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

With the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, close by, the Lord Chancellor said it was widely perceived by the public that under the last Government "relations between the higher judiciary and the Government had sunk to an all-time low". But the new Government had "learned from the errors of our predecessors," Lord Irvine said.

He "regarded it as of the first importance" that the judges' views were taken into account on proposed changes



Lord Irvine: he would be intermediary for talks

to the law. Any views the judges had of "damage they apprehend to the system from legislative proposals" should be able to be made known effectively to Government at a stage when policy is still being formulated.

Lord Irvine made clear that he saw himself as the intermediary between judges and the Government. Although it would sometimes be right for judges to have discussions

with other Cabinet ministers, he said "discretion should be exercised on both sides whether that might be appropriate".

He reminded the audience of several hundred judges that he was chairing several Cabinet committees, including one on the Queen's Speech and future legislation. Lord Irvine said he could not guarantee that ministers and judges would always agree, but if they disagreed, they would do so civilly.

In a spirit of rapprochement he added: "Any Lord Chancellor is likely to share with the judiciary common values arising out of the nature and long traditions of our justice system. I doubt that we will be disagreeing often."

Lord Irvine also signalled a concession on court fees, which have come under strong attack from across the legal profession as an obstacle to going to law.

He said he would be considering whether the existing exemptions from court fees which were sharply increased

earlier this year — should be extended beyond people on income support to those on other benefits such as jobseeker's allowance, the disability working allowance, and Family Credit.

He emphasised that the Government would listen carefully to the judiciary on what model for a Bill of Rights it favoured. But Lord Irvine made clear that whatever model was chosen would preserve parliamentary sovereignty.

The legislation would be introduced in the Lords and he would be "piloting it through the chamber," he said. "What is critical is that the form of incorporation (of the European Convention) sits comfortably with our United Kingdom institutions. It must not disturb the supremacy of Parliament."

"It must not put the judges in a position where they are seen as at odds with Parliament. That would be a recipe for conflict and mutual recrimination."



Nothing to beam about: Scotty, left, with Chekov and Captain James T. Kirk

Star Trek heroes can't go quite so boldly after all

By NICK NUTTALL

IT IS the sort of problem that Scotty, the chief engineer of the starship *Enterprise*, would have fixed in a few minutes with a useful smile and a spot of light welding. However, modern scientists say they cannot find any solution to the workings of

warp speed as featured in *Star Trek*.

Travelling beyond the speed of light would require an improbably large amount of energy, even for the pride of the space fleet. The energy needed to accelerate to Warp Factor One equals 10 billion times more energy than is locked up in the entire universe.

"This is a fantastic amount of energy. I don't think it's very likely that anyone will find a way to do this," said Larry Ford, a researcher from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, writing in *Classical and Quantum Gravity*.

The research, drawing on Einstein's general theory of relativity, suggests that the energy involved in one solution — shrinking space ahead of the ship and expanding it at the back — would

require an anti-gravity effect of awesome proportions.

However, a separate report in *New Scientist* offers news that transporters — used to beam *Star Trek* crew members between planets to the ship — may be edging from science fiction to fact. Other researchers have found that there may be a way of re-assembling humans atom by atom, without making a mess.

French scientists, writing in the *Physical Letters Review*, may have created the special atoms needed. Scrambling a person's atomic structure and re-assembling it had been deemed impossible. According to the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, you cannot measure all the properties of an atom precisely.

However, the French team have created entangled particles that carry "memories" of each other.

Aswan Dam 'may trigger Ice Age'

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE Aswan Dam could trigger a new Ice Age, a scientist has predicted. Bob Johnson, of the University of Minnesota, believes that building the Egyptian dam in 1968 has led to oceanic and climatic effects that could cause a massive build-up of ice in the Arctic, freezing the northern hemisphere.

Dr Johnson says in *New Scientist* that it is a "pretty far-out idea... but I am quite serious". His theory has some support from work by researchers at Colorado and Quebec universities. They have found evidence from marine fossils that the Ice Age of 120,000 years ago was caused when ice packs in the Arctic grew.

The Nile dam has stopped fresh water entering the Medi-

terranean, which is getting saltier. As salt water is heavier than fresh water, the flows from the sea are getting bigger. After leaving the Straits of Gibraltar, the extra flows move north, where they meet the warm Gulf Stream.

Dr Johnson, an oceanologist, says that this will push more of the stream into the Labrador Sea. This is likely to trigger heavier snowfall in the Arctic, causing a huge expansion of ice sheets. He wants a giant barrage built across the Straits of Gibraltar to reduce the extra flows.

Repeated bombardments of Earth by comets and asteroids may be more common than supposed. Canadian scientists have found evidence that the planet was hit by two huge objects 34 million years ago.

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Judges urge reform in gays' rights on housing

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE Government faced calls yesterday to reform the law after a man who lived with his homosexual partner for almost 20 years lost his battle for the same tenancy succession rights as a spouse.

The Court of Appeal ruled by two to one that Martin Fitzpatrick, 47, could not succeed to his partner's tenancy because the law does not recognise the rights of same-sex partners.

But Lords Justices Waite, Roch and Ward called for Parliament to legislate concerning the rights of gay men and lesbians. Lord Justice Waite said that the present law of succession as it related to tenancies protected under the Rent Acts was "arbitrary and discriminatory".

"Few would support the potential for unfairness involved in a law that gives automatic succession rights to wives (however faithful) and children (however feckless) any at the same time denies any hope of succession to friends, however devoted their loyalty to the joint household."

Mr Fitzpatrick, a former serviceman in the Royal Navy, said afterwards that he knew he could not win as the law stood, but claimed a "vital moral victory". He said he would take his fight for the tenancy of the flat in west London he shared with John

Thompson, a silversmith, until his death in 1994, to the House of Lords.

The court was told that the two men had a loving and monogamous relationship. They met in 1969 and lived in the flat from 1976. Mr Fitzpatrick looked after Mr Thompson for the last nine years of his life after he suffered irreversible brain damage from a fall downstairs.

Mr Thompson was the official tenant of the flat and after his death the landlords, the Sterling Housing Association Ltd, served Mr Fitzpatrick with notice to quit.

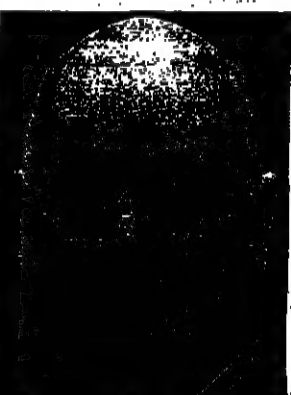
Lord Justice Waite said changes certainly had to be made "if Parliament is to fulfil its function of reflecting the spirit of our times — in particular the spirit that recognises the value of all abiding relationships, the heterosexual, the lesbian, the gay — or even those which are not sexually based at all".

Lord Justice Roch, who also found against Mr Fitzpatrick, said he agreed that the terms of the Rent Act 1977 should be reconsidered with a view to bringing such cases within the protection of the Act.

Lord Justice Ward, who would have allowed Mr Fitzpatrick's appeal, said: "There is no essential difference between a homosexual and a heterosexual couple and accordingly I would find that the appellant had lived with the deceased tenant as his husband or wife."

Peter Tatchell, of the gay rights group OutRage!, said: "The Government should respond to the judges' call for changes in the law by indicating its commitment to legislate equal rights for gay tenants and their partners."

Angela Mason, executive director of Stonewall, the gay rights pressure group, said: "Stonewall will now seek to have a Private Member's Bill tabled to give Parliament the opportunity to redress this wrong."



Fitzpatrick said he had won a moral victory.



The attentions of literary enthusiasts and harsh weather have reduced Top Withens farmhouse to a stone shell. It will be preserved but not rebuilt.

Rescue for Brontes' withering heights

A PENNINE farm said to have inspired the setting of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* is to be preserved after decades of neglect (Paul Wilkinson writes).

Top Withens is today a crumbling stone shell high on a desolate hillside above the Brontë family home at Haworth Parsonage, near Keighley, west Yorkshire. But 150 years ago it was regularly visited by the Brontës during their excursions on the moors.

Yorkshire Water, on whose land the building stands, is to spend £20,000 stabilising the surviving masonry but will not restore the building. Yesterday in the Commons, Ann Cryer, Labour MP for Keighley, called for the farmhouse to be listed. It was listed in 1974 after a campaign by her late husband, Bob Cryer MP, but was delisted in 1992, partly because of its poor condition.



The farmhouse, in its heyday, provided inspiration for Emily Brontë's only novel.

Mrs Cryer said: "I have campaigned with the Brontë Society for a number of years to get Yorkshire Water to protect the building. I am delighted by this promise to spend money on the site, but I want Yorkshire Water to carry out the work and I want Top Withens listed."

Yorkshire Water has been criticised in recent years for not caring for the landmark, which is visited by thousands of Brontë enthusiasts each year.

Bob Baxter, Yorkshire Water's conservation and recreation officer, said: "It is partly due to the gradual erosion of the farmhouse by inquisitive literary enthusiasts and partly due to exposure to the elements that Yorkshire Water has decided to take this action."

"Many people felt it would be wrong to try to recreate Top Withens in its entirety as the farmhouse would lose its ambience and mystique."

Sightseers may end up in the workhouse

By John Young

ONE of the earliest surviving workhouses in Britain has been acquired by the National Trust as an historic social monument and is likely to be opened to the public after repairs.

Thurgarton workhouse, in Southwell, Nottinghamshire, was formerly owned by the county council, and has suffered more than 20 years of neglect. Despite being listed Grade II*, it was under threat of redevelopment.

Built in 1824, it became a model for workhouse design and featured in a report that led to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, removing responsibility for poverty relief from local authorities and vested it in unions run by an elected Board of Guardians.

Workhouses were established to keep the destitute off the streets and, it was hoped, save them from a life of crime. Paupers, vagrants, the mentally and physically disabled, foundlings, and orphans were accommodated and fed in exchange for menial tasks.

Christopher Pennell, the trust's East Midlands director, said: "The building has an unrivalled potential to teach us about the past." The Trust is seeking funds for restoration, including a new roof.

Bed firm sues over escort agency listing

By a Staff Reporter

A BED company is suing Thomson's Directories after its local phone book entry appeared under the heading for escort agencies. The Blackpool family firm of Howarth Beds was listed as Howarth Beds.

Brian Howarth, 45, said: "We have had to cope with a great deal of ridicule. We have been bombarded with time-wasting phone calls, many of an indecent nature. I have had people coming into the shop and asking me, 'Where is the brothel?'"

"We have tried to reach a satisfactory conclusion but it has become apparent that issuing a writ is the only way forward. We need to clear our family name and our standing in business. Thomson offered us a free advert next year but that is not enough."

The firm is run by Cyril Howarth, 67, his wife, Mary, 66, and Brian, their son. The error in the 1997-98 edition comes after years of having a correct listing in the Thomson's Local directory.

Yesterday Howarth Beds issued a writ in the Blackpool District of the High Court, claiming undisclosed damages for alleged libel. The company maintain that the listing is defamatory and was written maliciously by an employee of Thomson's.

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Blair shows his strength in portrait taken by Snowdon

TONY BLAIR joins a long and distinguished list today with the publication of his official portrait by the Earl of Snowdon.

Eighty-six years after the first Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, was captured for posterity and more than two centuries after Sir Joshua Reynolds painted the first Conservative Prime Minister, the Earl of Bute, Mr Blair has entered history's political picture gallery.

The photograph shows an unsmiling Prime Minister whose face is partly in shadow. It is very similar to the one by Snowdon that was chosen for the front of Labour's election manifesto after voters complained that they had seen too much of Mr Blair's teeth.

Lord Snowdon said yesterday: "I did want to take a serious photograph of him and I thought it was the right thing to do. I just thought that if you look at his face, it's a very strong face and I think it's more interesting when he's concentrating."

He said it was hard to judge whether Mr Blair had been comfortable in front of the camera. "I don't think anybody is, or very few. I think to be photographed is not a terribly nice experience."

The picture was taken at Snowdon's gallery in Launceston Place, London, in a session lasting less than an hour. "He was in a rush," the photographer

Polly Newton on the latest addition to the historic picture gallery of political leadership

said. "He has got rather more important things to do but he went out of his way to be helpful."

Postcard-sized reproductions will be sent free to Blair admirers who write requesting a picture.

Other political figures photographed by Snowdon include Harold Macmillan, Margaret Thatcher and, more recently, John Major.

Charles Saumarez Smith, director of the National Portrait Gallery and the

author of a new book about its collection, said that Mr Blair's choice of photographer was significant.

"Going to Snowdon is the way to create a memorable image, one which has iconographic status, rather than just being a straightforward what the person looks like."

He said that the photograph released on Wednesday of William Hague, the Tory leader, was very conventional. "My sense was that it

was conservative with a small 'c'. It looked like a very high-class studio portrait. We might well acquire it, but it is not the type of image which we think is especially interesting."

"It did look slightly like the type of image which appears in constituency rooms. It has a slightly Eastern European aspect to it."

The Hague picture, like those of his predecessors, is indeed likely to grace hundreds of Tory association walls although there will be a price to pay. A spokesman for Central Office said that larger versions would sell for about £2 and smaller ones for £1.

Former Prime Ministers have sometimes taken risks with their choice of artist. When Baroness Thatcher was at 10 Downing Street, she repeatedly refused to sit for Helmut Newton, who is better known for his controversial images of semi-naked women than his portraits of politicians. He finally persuaded her after she had left office.

The huge, dramatic result hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.

Most if not all former Prime Ministers are represented in one form or another in the Palace of Westminster, although there is a ban on any picture or sculpture in the main building of anyone who has been dead for less than ten years. The idea is to give history time to judge who is worthy of a place on its hallowed walls.



Distinguished line-up: Ramsay MacDonald, William Hague and the Earl of Bute are among those who have been captured for posterity



The official portrait of Tony Blair. "It's a very strong face," Lord Snowdon said

Hague strategy is right but it won't be enough

William Hague yesterday delivered a speech of which Tony Blair would have been proud, up to a point. Mr Hague's language, as well as his specific proposals, had many echoes of Mr Blair's when he became Labour leader in 1994. However, Mr Hague's proposals on party organisation are a necessary condition for a Tory recovery, but far from a sufficient one. They omitted the other key element in the Blair strategy, the repositioning on policy.

Learning from Labour's successes is merely good sense. Labour took a long time to accept that its defeats were its fault, not the electorate's. John Smith's main weakness as leader was that he never told his party why it had lost. Mr Blair's main strength was to do so, and jolt his party into making the necessary changes.

Like Mr Blair in 1994, Mr Hague did not disguise the scale of the Tory defeat on May 1. His analysis was stark and honest. As he vividly remarked the party is "not much bigger than a large football club". He recognised how the party organises itself is crucial to its credibility. His ideas—creating a single party with a single constitution; establishing a national membership which will have a voice not just in the election of the leader but also in approving the party's policy platform for the election; a new disciplinary structure; and, most symbolic of all, on publishing major donors to the party and no longer accepting foreign donations—are all sensible, indeed overdue. This is not really democratic any more than Labour's new structure is. It increases the power of the national leadership which consults members and seeks their approval, but does not give them a detailed say in policymaking. There are also loose ends about what is foreign and the financial proposals anticipate likely government legislation.

But the Hague strategy is correct, and the party would be mad to reject it. I am sure they will not, since, like Mr Blair, Mr Hague is offering his party no real choice in this

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

autumn's ballot. He is cannily not only seeking backing for his leadership but also for the principles of reform. That should enable him to push through the detailed proposals over the next year.

The hole in the Hague strategy is policy. It would, of course, be silly, as he recognised yesterday, for the Tories to start setting out their manifesto now, or even detailed policies. That is one of the advantages of opposition. But the party does have to define where it stands in broad terms—on Europe, on reform of the welfare state, the size of the public sector, the extension of choice in education. In contrast to Labour in opposition, Mr Hague said members should "know they are free to think. I want us to have the courage and self-confidence to welcome diversity and debate. I want us to foster an atmosphere of intellectual liberty and renewal." We'll see.

An initial test is the front bench's reaction. So far this has been mixed. By chance, just as Mr Hague was speaking, Stephen Dorrell was giving the Tory reply to the government statement on higher education. As some furious Labour leftwingers, and the former Education Secretary and Labour deputy leader Lord Glenamara (Ted Short) argued, David Blunkett is ending the post-war approach of student grants for all. This is inevitable given the rise in student numbers. A re-elected Tory Government would have done much the same. But Mr Dorrell's response was carping and negative, in contrast to the more positive tone of a number of former Tory education ministers.

If the Tories are to look credible, they not only need to reorganise themselves along the lines Mr Hague suggested yesterday, they also have to sound convincing on policy. They do not remotely do so yet.

PETER RIDDELL



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REPORTS BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

STUDENTS will face tuition fees for full-time university courses within 14 months, after yesterday's publication of the first major review of higher education in three decades.

Sir Ron Dearing, the Government's senior education adviser, issued a 1,700-page report calling for a new "compact" involving students, business and the Government to raise investment in universities and colleges. All would have to contribute more to preserve the world-class status of British higher education.

Universities would face a cash crisis unless they were assured of the money to be raised from new student fees. Sir Ron said in the report. Projected budget cuts would endanger the quality of teaching and research.

State funding for each student has declined by 40 per cent since 1970 and is planned to drop by another 0.5 per cent during the next two years. Vice-chancellors estimate that they face a funding shortfall of £3 billion by the end of the century.

Sir Ron found limited scope for further economies. "We have concluded that institutions should be able to manage a 1 per cent a year real reduction in funding per stu-

FUNDING



Dearing yesterday: aim is to protect quality

dent over the next two years: a 0.5 per cent reduction would damage quality."

The review examined a series of options for graduate contributions. Sir Ron conceded that none of the four models he had considered in detail would meet the universities' short-term needs, but said all political parties had made it clear that no extra cash could be expected from taxation.

"There can be no more money from the students because they haven't got any; we don't believe there should be more money from parents. The right option is contributions from graduates on an income-contingent basis, as

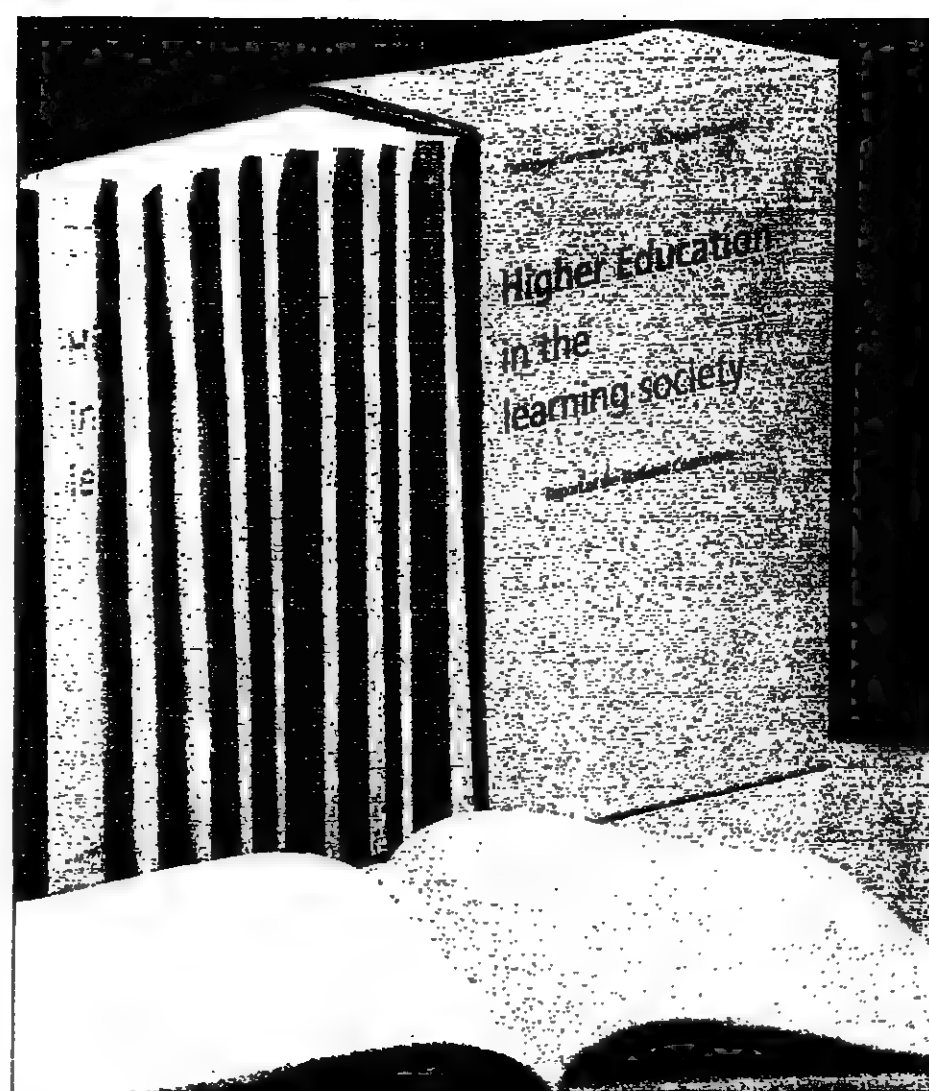
their earnings rise," Sir Ron said yesterday.

He acknowledged that many would see tuition fees as an unwelcome precedent. "To them I say there is a precedent for contribution to tuition fees in higher education. It is well established among 380,000 part-time and a further 370,000 postgraduate students, who already pay fees."

The report proposed safeguards against any future increase in the 25 per cent contribution to course costs represented by fees of £1,000 a year. An independent review should be commissioned, and both Houses of Parliament required to support an increase. Fees would be the same for all courses to protect the position of expensive subjects such as engineering.

Sir Ron said graduates should make a contribution because a degree still offered a "very good return" in terms of earnings potential. "Our proposed option would raise about £1 billion, approximately half the extra income required in 20 years' time. Government should increase its contribution to make up the rest as the economy grows."

Details of the Government's preferred scheme, scrapping maintenance grants and means-testing fees, will be worked out over the summer. Officials said that the yield for



The 1,700-page Dearing report sets out plans to raise £1 billion for higher education

higher education would be greater but refused to say when universities would begin to reap the benefits.

Under the Government's proposals, students from poor backgrounds would leave university with more debt than those from more affluent families — about £10,300 compared with just over £8,000.

But the Government scheme is likely to spread payments over 20 years, assuming graduates earn more than £10,000, instead of the ten years proposed by Sir Ron's committee.

The present level of parental contributions and zero interest rates for student loans will remain fixed under the Government's plans. Fees will be

waived for students whose parents earn less than about £18,000, with a sliding scale up to a maximum parental income of about £36,000. Extra loans will enable students to meet the costs.

David Blunkett, page 20
Leading article and Letters, page 21

Universities told to regulate degree quality

STANDARDS

THE Government will have to take direct control of higher education standards unless universities introduce reforms, Sir Ron Dearing said. His report puts the onus on the universities' newly-established Quality Assurance Agency to produce clear "threshold standards" for degrees, a national system of external examiners, and codes of practice in every institution. The report sets a target date of 2000 for the first of the changes.

The committee urges universities and colleges to "embrace vigorously" the standards agenda, which Sir Ron sees as the heart of his review. "New systems for the assurance of quality and standards must be in place and seen to be effective within a short space of time. If they are not, the Government will be justified in intervening to protect the interests of students."

British higher education has maintained its world standing despite doubling the number of students and having to make repeated economies, the report says. But the quality of degrees is variable.

"Given the large increase in the number of students taking degrees over the last 20 years, and a marked increase in the proportion awarded first or upper second-class honours, many think that it is not plausible to say that standards have not declined," the report says. "There is also a widely held view that stan-

dards are not uniform and cannot be in a mass system." Sir Ron expresses concern about the growing practice of "franchising" teaching on university degrees to further education colleges. A small number of institutions have also fallen below acceptable standards in overseas operations.

The report says that further education colleges should concentrate on sub-degree programmes and there should be no growth in the number of degrees they offer. Franchise arrangements should comply with tougher criteria set by the quality agency by 2001.

Teaching standards would be raised by a professional qualification overseen by a new Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. Financial incentives would encourage universities to place more value on teaching skills. A poll of academics found that only 3 per cent thought good teaching was reflected in their pay structure, while 63 per cent thought it should be.

There is little encouragement for those who favour an Ivy League of top universities with enhanced funding. The report says there should be no sudden changes in the structure of higher education, adding that institutions do not fit easily into neat categories.

Student places should be extended immediately Lessons taught by Scotland

THE expansion of higher education, which saw student numbers double in less than ten years, should restart immediately, Sir Ron Dearing recommended yesterday. But the main growth should come in one- and two-year courses.

Sir Ron's report suggests that demand for university and college places will continue to grow. He proposes that the present 30 per cent of young people going on to higher education should rise to about 45 per cent, a proportion already nearly reached in Scotland.

Business leaders and universities have urged renewed growth, citing the pressure of international competition. Britain lags behind the United States, Japan and other Far Eastern countries in the number of young people going on to higher education, although the three-year degree and relatively low drop-out rate

EXPANSION

ensure that the proportion of graduates in the population is among the world's highest.

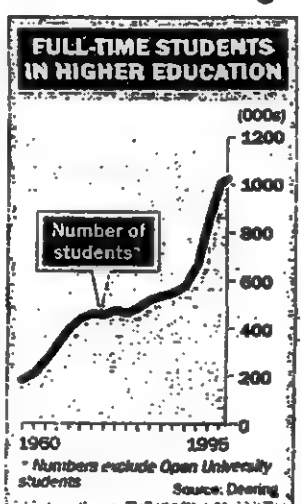
The expansion should focus on courses below degree level and on postgraduate programmes. The Government is urged to remove its cap on recruitment to sub-degree courses from September, and the limits on degree recruitment during the next two to three years. Extra funding should be given to institutions that can "demonstrate a commitment to widening participation". The committee has also published reports on attracting more women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and those from low-income groups.

Under Sir Ron's plans, further and

higher education would offer multiple entrance and exit points "with honour". Students would be encouraged to take certificate or diploma courses, which could lead to a degree or have currency in the employment market. Responding to calls from employers, Sir Ron recommends an increase in work experience, making it the norm for all students.

Within the 20-year timescale covered by the report, increasing use of information technology will lead to far more students taking courses from home or at work. In five years all students should have access to a networked computer provided by the university or college, the report suggests.

Sir Ron recommends that another higher-education review should take place in five years to take account of the speed of change in technology.



SIR RON DEARING and his 16-strong inquiry team travelled the world in search of models for higher education — and found one in Scotland.

The qualities that Sir Ron was seeking for England, Wales and Northern Ireland — greater breadth of education and higher levels of participation — are all in evidence north of the border. He considers it no coincidence that a greater respect for learning is also ingrained in the national culture.

A separate committee has produced a series of recommendations for Scottish higher education, including a shift away from its most distinctive

ROLE MODEL

characteristic: the four-year degree. But the main report makes frequent references to the lessons to be learnt by the rest of Britain.

Even Sir Ron's target of 45 per cent of young people in higher education was taken directly from Scotland, where almost that percentage already stays in education beyond school. The English equivalent is just over 30 per cent. Better still, in Sir Ron's eyes, a high proportion of Scots take college-based certificate or diploma courses, rather than degrees. And even

some of those who opt for university take ordinary degrees, rather than the longer honours course.

The parallel is not exact because most students north of the border go to university a year earlier than in England, but the first year of Scottish degrees, which involves studying general subjects, is another attraction for Sir Ron. The fact that 95 per cent of Scots choose to study in their own country is seen as a further indication of high quality.

Many of the same characteristics were evident in Japan, where Sir Ron made a brief visit.

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PERFORMAN

Berisha quits but vows to stay in Albanian politics

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

MORE than two weeks after his landslide defeat in the Albanian general election, President Berisha resigned yesterday.

In a letter to the new legislature, which was meeting for the first time, he announced his "irrevocable resignation" as head of state, but said he would continue to take part in parliamentary life.

His departure came as international pressure grew on him to accept the defeat of his Government by the opposition Socialist Party. The news was greeted with celebratory gunfire in Tirana and the southern port of Vlore and neighbouring towns where the revolt against his Government began.

Mr Berisha blamed his downfall on the fraudulent

pyramid schemes in which more than half the country invested and which left thousands destitute. Describing it, with some understatement, as a "negative phenomenon of our governing", he accused former Communists of exploiting the issue and using it as a pretext to foment rebellion.

With strong clan support from the north of Albania, Mr Berisha, 55, a former heart surgeon, made it clear that he was not retiring from politics. He said Albanians would have a chance to weigh up the balance between the five years of democracy — meaning his own rule — and the five months of rebellion.

His successor is expected to be Rexhep Mejdani, 52, the general secretary of the Socialist Party. The Socialists won 118 of the parliament's 155

seats, leaving Mr Berisha's Democrats with only 24.

Mr Berisha, a fluent English-speaker, was initially given warm support by the West, which was impressed by Albania's market reforms. But his rule was marred by widespread accusations of fraud and his reliance on secret police.

Three years ago, Albania had one of the highest growth rates in Europe. But criminal organisations and mafia gangs flourished and corruption was widespread. The suspected links between some of the pyramid scheme bosses and the Democratic Party led to demonstrations after the organisers fled and thousands were left bankrupt. More than 40 people were killed in subsequent rioting and looting.



Employees of the Museum of Monuments, which is housed in the Chailot Palace in Paris, inspect damage caused by Tuesday night's fire

Archives survive £5m Paris fire

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

VALUABLE collections of cinematic and architectural monuments escaped largely unscathed when fire swept across the roof of the vast Chailot Palace near the Eiffel Tower, causing an estimated £5 million damage, museum officials said yesterday.

The spectacular fire destroyed at least 43,000 sq ft of roof before it was finally brought under control in the early hours of yesterday by more than 200 firefighters from around Paris. Two firemen were slightly injured battling the blaze.

The damaged wing of the white stone palace, which was undergoing renovation to the roof near where the fire broke out on Tuesday night, contains the Cinema Museum, housing 30,000 films as well as props, posters, costumes and other cinema artefacts, and the Museum of Monuments, detailing the architectural history of France's most celebrated buildings.

Guy Cogeval, the museum's director, said that despite some water and smoke damage the impact on the collections was "relatively limited".

Initial evidence suggested the fire was accidental. A series of detonations heard when it started may have been caused by acetylene lamps left

by workmen, exploding glass or by bottled chemicals in the museum igniting, a spokesman for the Paris fire department said.

The monuments museum includes plans and models of such important buildings as Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris and the cathedral at Chartres.

Catherine Trautmann, the Minister for Culture, suggested that the fire may have been accidentally started by workmen and had apparently been smouldering for several hours, explaining the scale of the blaze.

"An investigation is under way. It appears there was soldering work being done during the day," Mme Trautmann said.

About one hundred casts of Gothic religious sculptures were damaged by flooding from firefighters' hoses, and parts of the two collections were removed to safety yesterday to avoid falling debris. By good luck, many of the more valuable pieces from the monuments collection had been rehoused in recent weeks, prior to a reorganisation of the museum.

"We feared there had been serious damage, but in the end the structure held together," M Cogeval said.

Gingrich move to quell rebellion

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

NEWT GINGRICH made a dramatic attempt to reassert his authority on Capitol Hill yesterday, deflecting the attacks of rebels who had attempted to topple him as House Speaker and insisting that he was still in charge.

Republicans at a closed caucus meeting said he had been cheered three or four times and given thunderous applause after a speech designed to unite a fractured party in the House of Representatives.

Mark Foley, a Florida congressman, described the botched coup attempt as an embarrassment but said the party expected no immediate changes in leadership.

"Mr Gingrich outlined that he is the Speaker, that there is a single line of authority and he is it. We welcome him back," Mr Foley said.

Mr Gingrich had already signalled that he wants no changes to the Republican hierarchy in the House, despite concerns over Dick

Armey, the majority leader, Tom DeLay, the Republican whip, and John Boehner, the conference chairman, who are thought to have been behind the coup attempt.

None of the men would comment after yesterday's meeting, but they were expected to make statements at another session scheduled for last night. However, neither silence nor denials are likely to appease Gingrich loyalists who were calling for accounts of their part in the coup.

"They are always preaching to us about teamwork and working together, and it's very apparent they have not been doing that themselves," said Ray LaHood, a Republican congressman from Illinois.

Those close to Mr Gingrich believe internecine fighting will prevent any further challenge to his authority before deals are struck with the White House on a balanced budget plan. Aides said that might change after the August recess.

Yeltsin challenged

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

RUSSIAN opposition leaders said yesterday that they were confident they could over-ride President Yeltsin's veto of a controversial Bill aimed at limiting the activities of religious minorities in Russia.

Mr Yeltsin announced late on Tuesday night that he would not sign the Bill despite overwhelming approval by both houses of parliament.

He said it had been a difficult decision, "but" many articles in the Bill infringe the basic rights and freedoms of the citizen, establish inequality of different confessions, and

contradict Russia's international obligations. The President proposed a list of amendments that would have limited the rights of groups such as Baptists, Mormons and Pentecostals.

Communist Party leaders in the state Duma said that his decision showed Russia's interests were being trampled underfoot by the West.

Good health: Mr Yeltsin said yesterday that his heart "works like a clock". On holiday in central Russia, he said: "I feel well and I am having a good rest." (Reuters)

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Red tape tripped up SAS in Bosnia

Legal delays and buck-passing let war crime suspects get away

BY MICHAEL BINTON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITISH forces in Bosnia came within minutes of seizing three indicted war criminals last March, but the snatch operation was called off because insecure communications gave the game away.

A British army unit, with SAS back-up, went into Prijedor on the morning of March 14 to arrest Siro Drljaca and Milan Kovacevic, the police chief and hospital director who were SAS targets two weeks ago. Drljaca, commander of the notorious Omarska concentration camp, was killed in a shootout at the second arrest attempt. The team also had orders to arrest Milomir Stakic, the Mayor of Prijedor — who subsequently went to ground and was not picked up two weeks ago.

The abortive operation in March tipped off the three men that they were wanted, and put them on alert. According to sources who have spoken to *The Times* on condition of anonymity, this was why Drljaca was so quick to draw a gun and shoot as soon as the SAS approached. His bodyguards and Serb militia had cracked the communications codes used by three investigators from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, who spent two days telephoning The Hague to overcome legal and bureaucratic delays.

From the start, the operation was hampered by the reluctance of the Stabilisation Force (Sf) to go beyond the restricted conditions authorising troops to arrest war-crime suspects. There was clear reluctance among the allies, especially by John Major's Government, to risk a shootout with armed Serb police and bodyguards. The operation was aborted days before Mr Major announced the general election in Britain. It remained a secret until details emerged yesterday.

The cumbersome legal procedure also meant that it took the full indictments. These had to be smuggled from Croatia across the Bosnian border in a British Land Rover. At midnight to avoid falling into the hands of the Serb police. On two occasions a senior American prosecutor flew directly to Bosnia at an hour's notice to try to persuade the British commander to authorise the arrests.

As a result of the failed snatch, British and American military planners made sure that they had top political authority and that all decisions could be executed within minutes during the second



attempt immediately after the Madrid Nato summit. The March operation came after mounting political pressure, especially by the American Government, to start arresting war-crime suspects. In January an investigation team, with a British military escort, began seeking evidence of atrocities in the British sector of Bosnia, visiting the site of the Omarska camp, ruined Muslim villages and places where corpses of civilians were being exhumed.

It took the international tribunal in The Hague two days to issue the full indictments.

from mass graves. The investigators were accompanied by a Swedish lawyer, two Swedish police and a British police officer. They toured round in Sf patrol vehicles, and regularly went to Prijedor, looking for evidence against the three men. But the Bosnian Serbs were deeply suspicious, tipped off by the insecure telephone network, armed Serbs appeared suddenly at most sites that the investigators visited.

By March 11 the team was ready to move against the three men. The question then was: who would make the arrests? Theoretically, this should have been left to the



Drljaca: quick to draw gun against the SAS

international police task force in Bosnia, but it declined. Lieutenant-General Roddy Cordy-Simpson, the British Sf commander in Sarajevo, was sympathetic, but Major-General Webb Carter, commanding the British sector from Banja Luka, needed specific authorisation.

For most of the day urgent cables went back and forth, from The Hague to Banja Luka to the small military team escorting the investigators. Sf demanded delivery of the full indictments — because the full charges had to be made available immediately to defence lawyers. The bulky sheaf of papers could not be faxed. So eventually an official flew at midnight to Croatia, and on the motorway near the Bosnian border handed over the documents to the military escort team in a marked Sf patrol Land Rover. The papers were concealed in the seat.

"D-Day" was planned for March 13. Surveillance operations had established that Drljaca went for coffee every morning at 10.30. But there was a delay. A lengthy chain of specific authorisations had to be agreed: from The Hague criminal tribunal to Nato headquarters, which in turn had to inform Sf and also the authorities in Republika Srpska. Sf again stalled. By the evening, the military escort spotted two suspects in Prijedor. Not till 2am did they get clearance to arrest them.

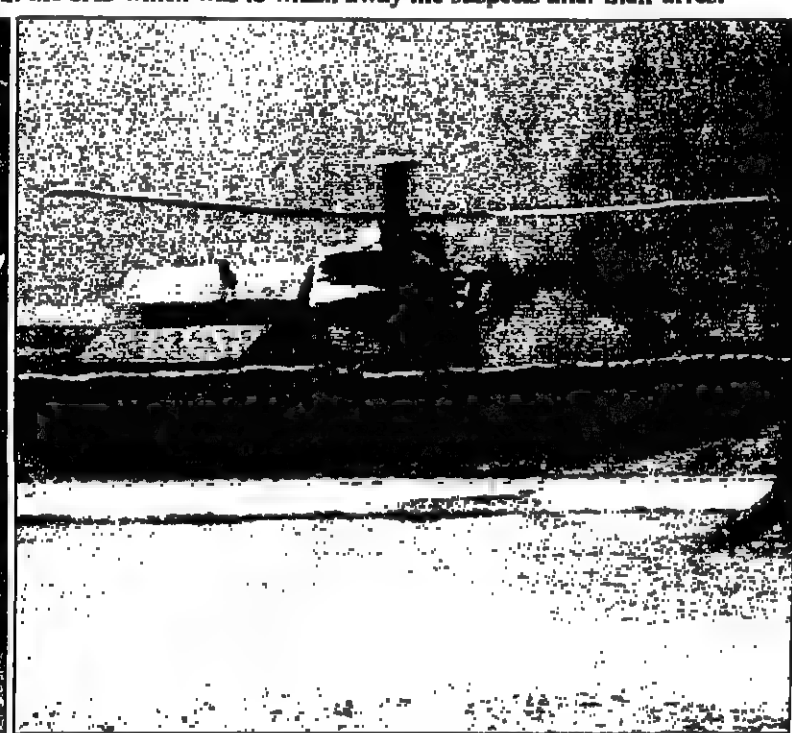
The plan called for military back-up. An SAS team stood by, ready to come in at five minutes' notice if trouble broke out. They had three Lynx Mk7 helicopters to bring in the forces and to whisk the suspects out of Bosnia as soon as they were arrested.

The final decisions were left to the small military escort. The priority was to avoid a shootout — and if trouble started, the investigators from The Hague were to be rushed out as fast as possible to Banja Luka. "Tango" was the call sign to bring in the SAS if things went wrong.

At the last minute, the plan was called off. The suspects were clearly alerted: they were closely accompanied by armed troops and bodyguards. "It was too risky," a source told *The Times*. And if shooting started, the Serb troops would move immediately against the nearest Sf base, only two minutes away. The SAS, investigators and military escort melted away. And so, when President Clinton and Tony Blair discussed a new snatch operation over a midnight beer in Madrid, they decided that the next time there would be no hold-ups, argument or political buck-passing.



The British escort team enters Prijedor on the morning of the proposed snatch as, below left, two troops wait at the roadside to receive the indictments and, right, a Lynx helicopter stands by to bring in the SAS which was to whisk away the suspects after their arrest



Serb aid warning

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN BRUSSELS

A TWO-DAY international donor conference on Bosnia opened here yesterday with a clear warning to the Serbs that they may be denied aid because of their failure to hand over indicted war-crime suspects.

Hans van den Broek, a European Commissioner and the conference chairman, emphasised that aid to parties who "oppose and frustrate" the goals of postwar reconciliation in Bosnia-Herzegovina "cannot be justified".

The European Union, which is co-chairing the conference with the World Bank, has suspended all non-humanitarian aid to the Serb Republic in Bosnia on the ground that its leaders have

failed to send their former leader, Radovan Karadzic, to face war-crimes charges. The EU has said that reconstruction aid will not resume while war-crime suspects continue to dominate political and economic activity in Republika Srpska. Organisers of the conference hope to raise \$1.4 billion (£850 million) in aid to stimulate the economy.

Mr van den Broek said that he expected to receive indications from donors "for next year's needs totalling some \$1.1 billion". Under the US-brokered Dayton peace accords which ended Bosnia's conflict in December 1995, the parties to the conflict pledged to hand over those indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for trial in The Hague.

Milosevic sworn in amid bitter protests

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN BELGRADE

SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC was sworn in yesterday as President of the Yugoslav Federation after thousands of protesters bombarded his car with stones and fought with police sent in to quash the demonstrations.

During his inaugural speech in the federal parliament, he promised "peace, progress and prosperity" during his four-year term as head of the federation, comprising Serbia and tiny Montenegro. True to his neo-communist style, he criticised independent media — whom he has been careful to keep under tight rein during his decade in power — as being under foreign "financial, political and moral influence". As he spoke, thousands of opponents gathered on the streets of Belgrade but police blockades prevented them reaching parliament.

However, more than 1,000 demonstrators, chanting "Red hands" — the battle cry of Mr Milosevic's opponents — did manage to reach a park just across from parliament. They bombarded his car with stones and other improvised missiles as he left the building. The protest was called by the independent university students' union. At least two

people were arrested and one protester was injured as police clubbed demonstrators, an independent television station reported.

Up to 300 of his supporters, bussed in from Belgrade suburbs, were allowed on to the steps of parliament. They carried his portraits and chanted: "Slobo, Slobo, Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia".

Presidential elections in Serbia to choose a successor to Mr Milosevic will be held on September 21. Mr Milosevic, who served as Serbia's President, was elected President of the Yugoslav Federation on July 15 in a vote which opposition parties said was illegal.

The federal presidency is largely ceremonial, but many believe Mr Milosevic will try to change the constitution to reflect the powers he has amassed as the most influential politician in Yugoslavia.

□ Election call: The Montenegrin parliament has called presidential elections for October 5, almost three months before the mandate of President Bulatovic expires. Mr Bulatovic, who enjoys Serbia's support, had wanted: early parliamentary elections instead to resolve a rift with Milo Djukanovic, the Prime Minister. (Reuters)

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- Pre-tax profits, excluding non-recurring items, up to £97 million — an increase of 10.2% compared to the 6 month period ended 30 June 1996.
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- Reduction in administrative expense ratio to 0.66 compared to 0.74 per £100 of mean assets at 30 June 1996.
- Assets now £14.6 billion — up by 13.6% compared to 30 June 1996.
- Net lending of £794 million representing an estimated share of the UK net mortgage market of 7% — around 2.5 times Northern Rock's expected "natural" share.
- Net retail receipts of £531 million — up 75% on the 6 month period ended 30 June 1996.
- Conversion plans to plc status are proceeding on schedule towards an expected flotation on 1 October 1997.

| | 6 months to 30 June 97 £m | 6 months to 30 June 96 £m | 12 months to 31 December 96 £m |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Interest receivable | 470.0 | 468.8 | 827.7 |
| Interest payable | (137.5) | (288.2) | (567.3) |
| Net interest receivable | 332.5 | 180.6 | 260.4 |
| Other income & charges | 19.9 | 22.3 | 36.1 |
| Total income | 352.4 | 202.9 | 296.5 |
| Administrative expenses - recurring | (47.0) | (45.0) | (91.5) |
| - non-recurring conversion costs | (9.4) | - | (10.3) |
| - non-recurring other costs | (24.8) | - | - |
| Provisions for bad and doubtful debts | (8.2) | (9.7) | (17.1) |
| Profit on ordinary activities before tax | 63.8 | 86.0 | 147.2 |
| Tax on profit on ordinary activities | (13.5) | (29.0) | (53.9) |
| Profit for the period | 50.3 | 57.0 | 93.3 |
| Total Assets | 14,649.8 | 12,846.5 | 12,717.9 |
| Gross lending | 1,240 | 1,601 | 2,073 |
| Net lending | 794 | 1,114 | 1,558 |
| Net retail receipts | 531 | 302 | 584 |
| Net non-retail receipts | 197 | 824 | 1,000 |

Notes: There have been no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the periods under review.

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Death row's cause célèbre marries on eve of execution



Urs: four-year fight

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

A CONVICTED murderer in Virginia yesterday married a volunteer legal assistant hours before he was expected to be executed in one of the most contentious capital cases in the state's history.

Joseph O'Dell and Lori Urs, the woman who has fought for four years to prove his innocence, held a short afternoon wedding ceremony in a room next to the death chamber at Greensville Correctional Centre where he was later expected to face a lethal injection last night (2am British time).

Despite pleas for clemency from the Pope, the Italian Government

and Mother Teresa, authorities were last night preparing to carry out the sentence as defence lawyers made a final appeal to the Supreme Court.

After exchanging marriage vows, the couple were permitted a one-hour meeting with no physical contact before O'Dell was led back to his cell on death row. There would be no conjugal rights and no further contact, a prison official said.

O'Dell was arrested after leaving bloodsoaked clothes at a girlfriend's house.

However, since his conviction for the 1983 rape and murder of Helen Scharner in Virginia, his supporters have questioned DNA testing in the case which suggested that blood on his jacket belonged to Scharner.

Despite having no ties to Italy, O'Dell has capitalised on Italian opposition to the death penalty, sending regular Internet messages to newspapers in Rome and Milan from his prison cell.

As a result, the case has become a cause célèbre, prompting both the Pope and Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, to intervene on his behalf. Delegations from the Italian parliament have been sent to Virginia to demand a stay of execution and the Vatican's television station continued to call for mercy yesterday.

Signor Prodi, during several recent meetings with President Clinton, is said to have avoided all talk of Nato expansion and Bosnia and instead lobbied strenuously for a

commuted sentence. The convicted prisoner has been made an honorary citizen of Palermo, the Sicilian capital, and authorities there have discussed the possibility of flying his body to the city on an Italian Air Force plane.

Gail Lee, the victim's sister, said that the overwhelming support for O'Dell had been particularly hard for her family.

"By listening just to one side of the case, the Italians have in essence said to my family, 'You are worthless, Helen's life didn't matter,'" Ms Lee said.

Opponents of the death penalty in the United States have seized on the case as a further symbol of the pitfalls inherent in the system of

capital punishment. O'Dell is represented by lawyers and public relations agencies in Washington and New York and leading abolitionists have flocked to his cause.

Sister Helen Prejean, the author of *Dead Man Walking*, the best-selling book which was later made into a film starring Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn, has become his spiritual adviser, while Clive Stafford Smith, a British lawyer based in Louisiana who specialises in contesting capital sentences, has also been called in to argue on his behalf.

"It is quite clear to us that there are numerous discrepancies in this case and it highlights exactly the problems of having a death penalty," said Mr Stafford Smith.



O'Dell: plea from Pope

Collapse of dyke forces Germans to flee

FROM DEBORAH COLCUTT
IN FRANKFURT

ONE of the sodden dykes holding back the torrential Oder river in eastern Germany finally burst yesterday, flooding low-lying villages and forcing residents to evacuate their homes.

Not everyone in the state of Brandenburg went quietly, and police had to forcibly remove about 50 people who had barricaded themselves inside their homes for fear of being looted.

More than 2,300 people had to be evacuated after the river breached the dyke after days of heavy rain, leading to rising flood waters pouring into the region on the German-Polish border. The 100-mile long dyke burst in two places after currents weakened the numerous sandbag defences that had kept the water at bay since last week. One of the breaches was 300ft long, Jürgen Dollase, a police spokesman, said.

One of the areas flooded was near the town of Aurich, about eight miles south of Frankfurt an der Oder, and Rutzdorf, from where 800 residents were evacuated early yesterday. About 40,000 livestock animals were transported out of the region as cellars and low-lying streets in Frank-

furt and surrounding villages were inundated.

In Frankfurt yesterday flood waters surged above the 1930 record level. Although the weather remained sunny, flood waters rose in several neighbouring villages and more rain is forecast for today.

More than 35,000 police, firefighters, soldiers and volunteers have been working around the clock to plug gaps in the dykes. So far they have been able to control the worst of the torrent, in contrast to neighbouring Poland and the Czech Republic where 128 people have died and thousands of farmers face financial ruin in the worst floods this century.

President Kwasniewski visited the Polish side of the Oder yesterday. He met Wolfgang Pohl, the Mayor of Frankfurt an der Oder, on a bridge linking the two countries to discuss rescue efforts.

In the Czech Republic, the Government has pledged to help those whose livelihoods have been ruined by the unseasonal heavy rains that have been battering the region for the past fortnight. Flood waters have damaged more than 12,000 homes in 500



Flood waters from the Oder pour through a broken dyke into eastern Germany where more than 2,000 people have been evacuated

towns and villages and cut road, rail and telecommunications as well as swamping valuable crop land.

In Germany, where Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, paid a visit to the stricken area this week, the Government pledged aid and low-interest loans to repair the flood dam-

age which, according to some insurers, will cost hundreds of millions of marks. The eventual cost will only be known when water levels subside. Offers of help for the victims have been pouring in from all over Germany.

In the worst-hit areas in Poland and the Czech Repub-

lic there is now a serious threat of diseases because many sewers have broken and flood waters are contaminated with rotting food and animal carcasses.

A German firm in Saxony-Anhalt said it would deliver 105,000 gallons of mineral water to the Wroclaw region of

Poland today and hopes to be able to help out in the Czech Republic too.

Marek Sobczak, a flood crisis official in Poland, said the latest flood wave would soon reach the southwestern city of Opole and would probably later inundate the residential estate of Zacisze in

Wroclaw, further north. But he said there would be no repeat of the earlier calamity that flooded Opole and much of Wroclaw in up to 6 ft of water.

"We should not expect another catastrophe on the same scale as early this month," Mr Sobczak said.

US puts foot down for no-hands driving

FROM GLEN WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES

NO HANDS. No feet. Not even any eyes. On one of America's first stretches of fully automated highway, scheduled to open in 2002, human driver input is positively discouraged.

At a demonstration of the 7.6-mile stretch of interstate highway east of San Diego, a bus driver relinquished all control of his vehicle to an on-board computer and several thousand magnets embedded in the tarmac. The bus promptly swerved to avoid a traffic cone. Such are the wonders of 21st-century driving technology to which Congress hopes drivers will entrust their lives as congestion mounts and land for new road building runs out.

The demonstration on a two-lane expressway that was closed to non-computerised traffic featured cars with



Hung Pham, of Honda USA, shows off his hands-free driving technique

radar sensors and rear-view video cameras, and magnetic "nails" at 4ft intervals on each side of each lane. Using a navigation system developed by Honda, the vehicles checked their position in relation to the magnets and each other every few seconds. It

was, one engineer involved said proudly, "really dull. It's really exciting for about the first 15 seconds, then it's like driving with a chauffeur." No-hands driving on automated highways will allow cars to move faster, safer and more economically than the current

system of relying on weary and irritable humans, according to the National Automated Highway System Consortium. The consortium, which includes General Motors and several universities among its members, won a \$200 million (£119 million) government re-

search contract as part of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (also known as Ise Tea).

The site of America's first public automated road has not yet been chosen: nor has the exact technology. The computerisation of American driving appears inevitable, however: while the know-how exists to drive long lines of cars fast and safely only a few feet apart, studies show that 90 per cent of American road accidents are caused by human error.

Equipping a road with magnets and radar reflectors can cost as little as \$10,000 a mile instead of the millions a mile of new road would cost, a consortium spokesman said. On-board computers and cameras will add hundreds of dollars to the price of a car. The environmental benefits of the new system are said to come from saving in your fellow driver's slipstream.

States block Klan's plan to collect litter

BY TOM RHODES

A GROWING number of states are taking legal action to prevent the Ku Klux Klan from taking part in a nationwide anti-litter programme.

The Adopt-a-Highway programme, started ten years ago in Texas, has been a useful means by which local authorities in America can save money. Members are required to pick up rubbish along their adopted stretch of road while the state, in turn, provides litter bags and orange safety vests to volunteers.

But now Klan members in Florida are threatening to sue the state if they are unable to "adopt" a stretch of motorway near Deltona, while officials in Missouri and Texas have taken cases to federal court to block the racist organisation from what is seen as a pre-

rogative of local communities. Four years ago, the Klan adopted Highway 65 near Harrison, Arkansas, the national headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan. Since then, eight roadside signs recognising the group's contribution have been replaced because of vandalism.

Although the states argue that the Klan sends entirely the "wrong message" and should be barred from the programme, the organisation argues it wants to be granted the same status as other civic or fraternal groups: to be a part of the local community.

"Really, we're just like the Lions or the Elks. We want our good works to be visible," said Jeff Coleman, the Grand Wizard of the Royal Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Florida.

Steffi Graf said in an interview a few years ago that she was a firm believer, prayed regularly before important tournaments and often accompanied her father to their local church in Brühl, in south-western Germany, where the Grafs have a family villa.

When 18, she was invited to the Vatican with her younger brother, Michael, for a private, half-hour audience with the Pope. At the time, she was unable to play tennis because of an injury and was reported to have been encouraged by the Pope's words.

Ten years on, she is again unable to compete in tournaments because of a knee injury many fear could prevent her playing professionally again.

Since her father's tax evasion conviction, her main sponsors, Opel, BASF and Dunlop, have dropped her. A £4 million contract with Adidas runs out this year and will not be renewed.

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034



Macpherson: nude pictures stolen

Model in 'toy boy' claim

FROM GILES WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES

ELLE MACPHERSON, the Australian fashion model, is suing the lawyer of a client accused of stealing nude pictures of her and threatening to publish them on the Internet.

The photographs were taken from her Los Angeles home last month along with jewellery, cash and blank cheques. Two men, who later demanded \$60,000 (£36,500) for not publishing the pictures, were arrested by undercover police when they turned up at a rendezvous to collect the money. Michael Mischler, 29, and Ryan Holt, 26, have been charged with burglary and extortion.

Mr Mischler's lawyer has said his client cannot be guilty of burglary as he claims he was an invited guest of Ms Macpherson on the night in question and that she treated him as a "toy boy".

Ms Macpherson denied ever meeting Mr Mischler and told a press conference on Tuesday that she is suing his lawyer, Lawrence Young, for defamation.

Liberia warlord wins 'vote for peace' election

By SAM KILEX, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

CHARLES TAYLOR, the Liberian warlord, yesterday won through the ballot box the power he had tried to take by force. He received more than 70 per cent of the vote in an election aimed at ending seven years of civil war.

Mr Taylor, 49, who sparked the war when he invaded Liberia from neighbouring Ivory Coast in December 1989, inherits a country on which he inflicted drug-using child soldiers. Liberia's war has cost 150,000 lives and forced more than half the 2.5 million population from their homes. But its most frightening legacy is the tens of thousands of young fighters whose traumatic and bizarre war experiences have left many deeply troubled.

Human rights groups have given warnings that democracy in Liberia will have to be matched with intensive efforts to rehabilitate the child soldiers.

A West African peacekeeping force led by Nigerian troops fanned out across Liberia — sub-Saharan Africa's first independent nation, founded by freed American slaves in 1847 — to ensure that the polls were not disrupted.

About 500 electoral observers said yesterday that the elections had been "free and fair" although many illiterate voters needed help to fill out their ballot papers. The turnout was overwhelming — 600,000 of the 700,000 registered voters took part in what was seen as an "election for peace".

Mr Taylor's nearest rival,

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, won just over 9 per cent of the vote and after initially suggesting that the polls had been rigged, promised to mount a vigorous parliamentary opposition to his All Liberia Coalition Party.

Mr Taylor's success was ascribed to two factors. International observers said many Liberians feared that if he failed to win at the polls, he would return to war. He also won over supporters by issuing an apology to the nation for the war when he cast his ballot last Saturday. "Taylor came across as the only person who would be strong enough to unite the factions," one European diplomat said.

Economist, the West African peacekeeping force, will continue to oversee the disarmament of Liberia's many factions as part of a peace agreement — the fourteenth since 1990 — which led to the polls. Foreign aid groups have



Taylor received more than 70 per cent of vote

begun trying to reintegrate child soldiers into society, but as one commented yesterday: "It's difficult to maintain discipline in a classroom if half the kids are killers and have known absolute power."

Further signs of discord were reported by Liberia's vigorous press, which said that many members of the Krahn ethnic group in the former government army were worried after the victory of their former enemies.

Furthermore, al-Haji Kromah, a warlord who fought against Mr Taylor, claimed that there had been serious irregularities in the elections.

"This was no election," said Mr Kromah, who was formerly an ally of Mr Taylor. "The elections that we see here are marred with numerous things: some very illogical, some directly offensive to the election proceedings. All combine to show that we are making a big mockery of democracy and this result is totally unacceptable," he said.

□ **Bamako:** The ruling Alliance for Democracy (Adema) in Mali swept elections which were boycotted by most opposition parties, the electoral commission announced.

Based on returns from 50 of Mali's 55 electoral districts, Adema won 110 of the 147 legislative seats contested in the vote on Sunday, while moderate opposition parties won five, the national electoral commission said. Turnout was 12 per cent in Bamako, the capital, and 22 per cent elsewhere. (AFP)



Cyndi Lauper, whose hits include *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, performing at New York's Radio City Music Hall. She told the audience she is expecting a boy

West's bid to cut child labour backfires

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
IN DELHI

INTERNATIONAL efforts to save Indian children from toiling on carpet looms are threatening to become a disaster for the people they are meant to help.

The centuries-old hand-made rug industry, providing vital income to some of the world's poorest people, is suffering because of well-intentioned but often misguided foreign intervention.

Indian rugs — as well as those from Pakistan and Nepal — are becoming stigmatised because of the belief that they are produced by young, forced labour. Almost every rug made in South Asia has an element of child labour in it, but most child weavers work for their parents on small family looms set into the mud floors of their village huts.

There is little choice for poor children but to work: if they were not on looms they would be down mines, in glass or fireworks factories, at garage workshops, stone quarries and brick kilns, or producing *bidis* (thin cigarettes) and matches in dangerous conditions.

The biggest impact on the carpet industry has come from a project called Rugmark, under which carpets supposedly free of child labour are specially labelled. The scheme, relying on inspectors, is mainly to reassure Western buyers, but is nearly impossible to enforce.

Rugmark is backed by Unicef and a number of prominent foreign charities.

Mbeki 'rides gravy plane'

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

JUST as the "gravy train" furore over high salaries seemed to have subsided, South Africa's political elite is being accused of upgrading — to the "gravy plane".

Opposition politicians have expressed outrage over next week's exodus of Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, ten Cabinet ministers, two deputies and more than 100 officials on a mass junket to Washington, where they will be indulged by Al Gore, the Vice-President, and other American counterparts: all of whom they last saw only five months ago.

The mass decampment is occasioned by what officials called the fourth half-yearly meeting of the US-South Africa binational commission, co-

chaired by Mr Mbeki and Mr Gore. But on closer inspection it is, in fact, the fifth meeting, and what the ministers of housing, water affairs, agriculture and labour, among others, will be up to when the only major item on the agenda is setting up a committee to deal with defence is anyone's guess.

Tony Leon, the opposition Democratic Party leader, is furious: "I think there is a great tendency [in the Government] to fly overseas rather than tackle problems at home," he said. "It adds excitement to the job, no doubt."

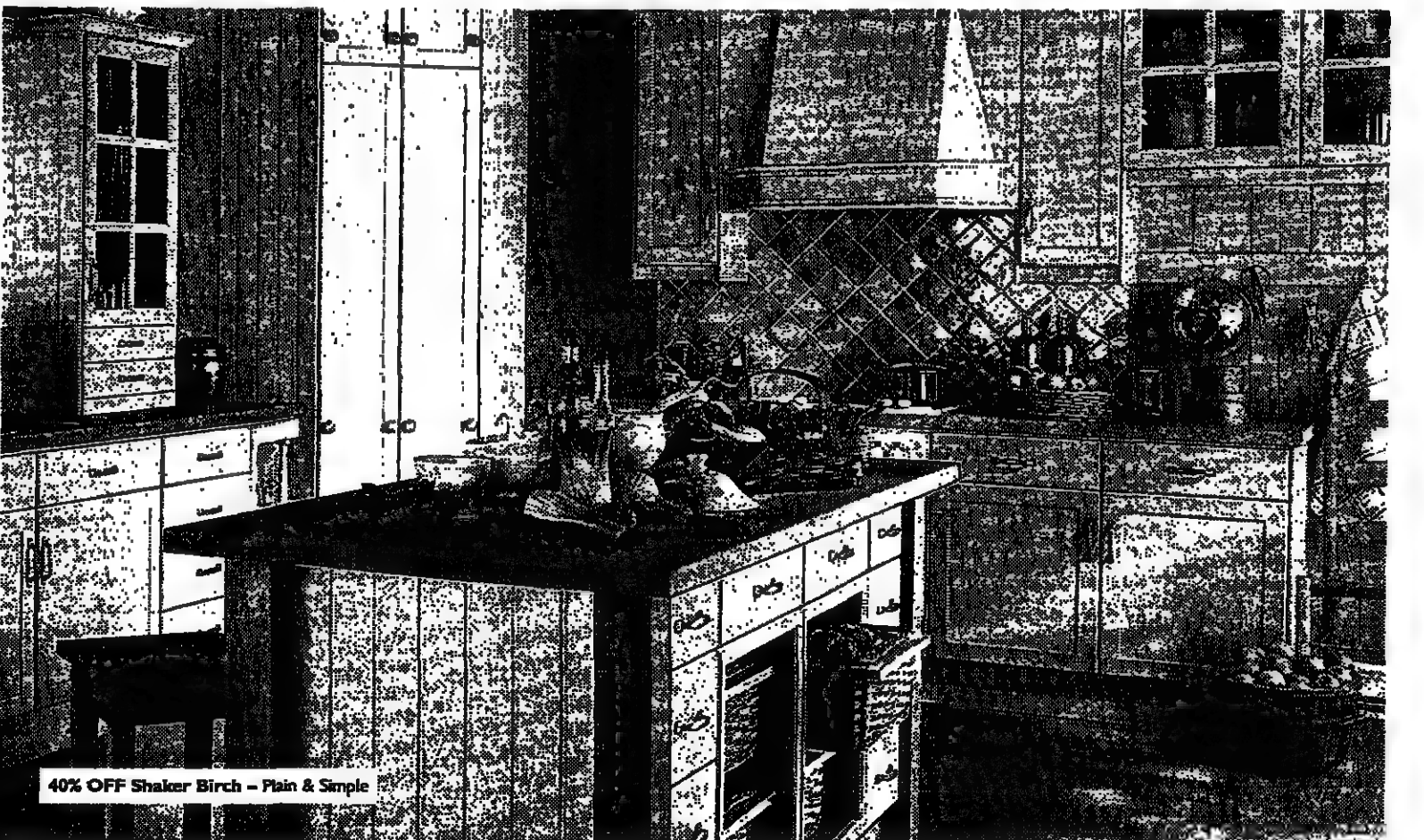
It was excitement engendered by South Africa's participation in the Atlanta Olympics that led several ministers

and their officials to swap briefcases for sun hats, and there is concern that this may have started a trend.

The big pay packages and lucrative perks accorded to the new political elite prompted Archbishop Desmond Tutu to accuse senior politicians and others of stopping the gravy train "just long enough to get on it". Mr Mbeki has personally been linked to several exorbitant functions.

Clearly President Mandela's call for his colleagues to tighten their belts has been ignored. A conservative estimate of the travel and five-star hotel bills for the latest big-spend trip exceeds £250,000. Ministers will also have chauffeur-driven cars at their disposal.

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Dr Thomas Stuttford on the benefits of wearing sports shoes; patterns of weight gain; life after the menopause; male infertility; and the risks of taking steroids

Trainers can keep your feet healthy

Thirty years ago a foreign correspondent, newly appointed to London, was told by his news editor that he could determine all he needed to know about a male Briton's character and class by looking at his shoes and socks.

Now that Britain is becoming a classless society his successors would find it difficult to label a man after a glance at his feet. Trainers are now universally accepted informal wear for younger people of both sexes and all backgrounds. In most traditional professions trainers would still be viewed with disdain by senior colleagues at work, but they are accepted in advertising, television and any job where a uniform appearance is of less importance than comfort.

The best trainers provide varying levels of air cushioning in the sole, which protects joints from the repetitive jarring which can lead to arthritis. They offer support to the ankle but their flexible, air-permeable uppers also allow ventilation so that the skin between the toes does not become soggy and a haven for fungi. The inside of trainers can be readily sprayed with a fungicide such as Dakartin, which keeps athlete's foot at bay.

The support a trainer offers to the three arches of the foot, as well as to the ankle, should reduce the incidence of one of the most tiresome of foot conditions — plantar fasciitis. The plantar fascia is a thick layer of fibrous connective tissue which lies beneath the skin and is attached to the heel bone at one end and, after running under the longitudinal arch of the sole of the foot, to the base of the toes at the other. In plantar fasciitis the fascia under the heel becomes inflamed and painful.

Dishan Singh, senior lecturer of the Foot and Ankle Unit of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore, west London, together with John Angel, a consultant orthopaedic surgeon at the hospital, Professor George Bentley, also from Stanmore, and Professor Saul Trevino, of Houston, Texas, have recently reviewed the diagnosis and treatment of plantar fasciitis in the *British Medical Journal*.

Doctors see so many cases of plantar fasciitis, the most common cause of heel pain, that they tend to assume that everyone with a painful heel suffers from it. The condition can be confused with Reiter's Syndrome, a sexually transmitted complaint, ankylosing spondylitis, a stress fracture of the heel bone, an infection of the bone, damage to the nerves leading to the foot or, in older people, Paget's Disease or tumours.

'They support the three arches of the foot and ankle'

A patient with plantar fasciitis will notice an increasingly severe pain under their heel bone. The pain is worst in the morning, so that when the sufferer gets out of bed he has to limp. Provided that he does not do anything too vigorous, the pain soon lessens. But it returns with a vengeance if he jogs, plays tennis or cricket, goes hiking or even walks too vigorously along the pavement.

The authors of the report suggest that this morning pain is characteristic of plantar fasciitis, whereas other causes of heel pain do not get better once the patient is up and about. Similarly, if the pain persists throughout the night a doctor's suspicions should be aroused in case there may be some other cause.

Some people are at increased risk of developing plantar fasciitis. Those who usually live a sedentary life, but suddenly



Camilla Parker Bowles looks athletic and muscular, if somewhat broad — a pattern of weight that may not be unhealthy

The clue to health is in the size of the waist

A PATIENT carrying a copy of the Italian magazine *Oggi*, tells me that Italian men greatly admire and are intrigued by Camilla Parker Bowles. *Oggi* makes a speciality of publishing photographs of the famous and this week has pictures of Mrs Parker Bowles and of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Mrs Parker Bowles looks athletic and muscular, if somewhat broad. On the other hand, although seemingly much slimmer, the Princess has been putting on weight around her lower abdomen. In the long term these different patterns of weight gain may be of great medical significance.

Doctors are concerned as to how and where weight is put on. There is overwhelming evidence to support the theory that if excess weight is carried centrally, characterised by the development of a heavy chest and abdomen while the limbs remain skinny, the patient has an increased risk of developing heart disease, hypertension and some forms of diabetes. This risk becomes much more apparent once the abdominal girth exceeds the hip measurement.

British research in 1995 suggested that men should aim to keep their waist measurements to under 37in, and women to under 31½. More recently, Canadian doctors suggested this is too stringent, men's waists are acceptable at 40in and there is a corresponding increase for women.

A change for the better

At the time of the Roman Empire, the life expectancy of a woman was 23 years and it was not until the late 19th century that more than one-third of women in Britain lived long enough to reach the menopause. Now a girl born in Britain can expect to live to 78, including a 27-year span after the menopause.

Fortunately, treatments are available to alleviate the symptoms of ovarian failure and these provide the essential hormones lost to those women who defy nature by living beyond their fifth decade.

There have recently been several dramatic reports which have emphasised the disadvantages of hormonal replacement therapy (HRT), without stressing their enormous benefits.

There seemed to be no better way of verifying the facts about HRT than by consulting the second edition of *Gynaecology*, edited by Professor Robert Shaw, Mr Patrick Soutter and Professor Stuart

Stanton, as the book is rapidly becoming a standard reference work for doctors.

Gynaecology includes a fascinating account of the history of the menopause. The average age at which a woman's period stops has been around 50 since Roman times. Aristotle, writing in the 6th century, discovered that the age was then 50, 100 years later Paulus Aegineta came to the same conclusion, as did Hildegard in the 12th century and Gilbertus Anglicus in the 13th century.

There has however been some change in the past 700 years; official British figures show that the average age of the menopause here is now 51.

Unlike the time of the start of menstruation, race, diet, poverty, weight and height do not affect the timing of the menopause. The average age of the

menopause is the same in South Africa or South Kensington. A study a few years ago showed that there was an exception — women who lived in the islands off the north of Scotland had a later menopause than those anywhere else in the world. It is known that gynaecological surgery, in particular hysterectomy, has an effect on the timing of the menopause. The authors of the chapter point out that the only medical influence on its timing is cigarette smoking. They do not speculate on why this is, but others have suggested it could result from damage to the ovarian blood supply.

Since *Gynaecology* went to press there has been a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that alcohol, even in modest amounts,

increases oestrogen levels in women taking HRT but not, this particular survey showed, in women not on hormone replacement. Previous studies have suggested that alcohol increases oestrogen levels in all women, so it is possible that the 'Scottish islanders' late menopause may not be so much related to Darwinian natural selection, but to the availability of whisky.

In the long term, increased levels of oestrogen, from wherever they have been derived, reduced instances of osteoporosis, heart disease, senile dementia, genital and urethral atrophy, so that patients not only live longer but are happier and brighter. The disadvantages of HRT are that it occasions an increase in the incidence of cancer of the breast and, to a lesser extent, uterus, and that a proportion of patients find that mood swings before the monthly bleed when they are taking progestogens are unacceptable.

Gynaecology is published by Churchill Livingstone, price £115.

Race, diet, poverty, weight and height do not affect the timing

Why men need to be pampered

FARMERS have never had any doubts about the importance of looking after the sires on their farm. The bull, boar and stallion were cosseted both physically and mentally. Doctors did not learn from their rural patients, and when discussing fertility usually assumed the cause rested with the woman.

In an increasing number of infertile partnerships, the state of the male sperm is responsible. The origins of the trouble have usually been thought to be physical, and when a low sperm count is found questions are asked as to a possible history of mumps, sexually transmitted diseases, some forms of chronic cough and nasal congestion and other illnesses. The wearing of tight clothing, working in very hot surroundings or even having too plump a mother with high-circulating oestrogen levels have also been blamed, as has the taking of drugs, whether medically prescribed such as steroids or socially such as tobacco and excessive alcohol. Spermatogenesis may also be influenced by trauma, whether surgical or from exposure to industrial chemicals.

A recent edition of the *Journal of Andrology*, however, reports that psychological stress can also affect the mortality of sperm and their ability to swim determinedly towards the ovum, particularly if it is the death of a close relative. It could be argued that men, like bulls, need to be well fed, emotionally pampered and protected from injury, physical or mental.

ARTHUR and Victoria McConnell, of Abingdon in Oxfordshire, are campaigning for greater awareness of the risk of contracting chickenpox while taking steroids. They claim that their daughter, Lexie, would never have died if they had been told of this possibly lethal combination, and if they had known they would have taken precautions to keep Lexie away from anyone with the disease.

Protection for patients on steroids

People who are known to be immune-suppressed — which includes those on steroids — and therefore very vulnerable to chickenpox, can be protected by having injections after they have been in contact with a case. They should certainly see their doctors so that this may be done.

It would be a pity if Lexie's case was allowed to detract from the huge benefit that thousands of people with a wide range of diseases derive from steroid therapy. Steroid drugs cause well recognised side-effects, which in occasional cases can be severe, but they are frequently life-saving and their use represents one of the great advances of medicine in the past 40 years.

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This little make a big to your m

Lunch is not for wimps

Tunku Varadarajan gets New York food-phobes to rediscover their appetites

I live and work in New York and I'm a wicked, witty, tar-tar-tar, tan-tan-tan, meat-eating, caffeine-quaffing, subversive in a suit. Let me explain. I was at lunch the other day. I won't say with whom, but the occasion was styled as a "working lunch". In New York, working lunches are frugal affairs, where people strive to interest each other in ideas, marketing plans, visions for the future, that sort of thing. That, of course, is not my idea of lunch at all. Claret should always come first (or, in America, a "Cally Cab Sauv"). Claret can go to hell or to the next table. I arrived at the restaurant a few minutes late, to find my hosts already seated, sipping bottled water. They greeted me warmly, but showed no sign of calling for a wine list or beckoning a sommelier. In fact, they decanted water into my glass and hit me with that ghastly, virtuous smile born of drinking too much fizzy H₂O and too little vino. Unable to bear the torment after a sip or two, I blurted out: "I'd like some wine please, if it's not against the rules." Host A, a clean-cut chap with a Kirk Douglas jaw, looked startled, his gaze spinning to meet the eyes of Host B, a frizzy-haired Bette Midler lookalike. "Oh, of course," he said, with slightly delayed graciousness. There followed a startling metamorphosis. As the wine list came, and I studied it, a liberating breeze blew across our table. Kirk and Bette decided, "What the heck," they'd have some, too. They looked at me with what I took to be thankfulness, a

mucho gracias for leading them astray. Next, we examined our menus. Grilled tuna salad for Kirk, Caesar salad for Bette. "I'll have a sirloin steak," I declared. "Medium rare." Once again, my choice appeared to free them from their cage of lettuce leaves. Purring in unison, they plumped for the steak as well. My, my, I thought, what power I wield over these two repressed specimens of urban American life. But there was more. Come coffee time, both abandoned plans to drink claret and went for the hard-core stuff. Again, I was the evangelist. Kirk and Bette are New York archetypes — people bursting to be had — and no one bursts more than the closet smoker. At every party I've been to, I'm always the first to pull the packet from the pocket, tap that evil cigarette out, and smoke. There is a gentle clearing of throats, some dirty looks and, occasionally, an open admonition. Yet always, there are people who side up to me and say "Hey, pssst... got another cigarette?" Meet the closet smokers, who long to light up but never dare lest a holl of anti-smoking wrath smile them on the head. I always give them a bag or two and their reaction is akin to that of freed slaves towards a kindly master. I have not been healed yet. But there are now hundreds of New Yorkers who remember me in their prayers every night. For I have given them red meat and wine, and blessed them with my cigarettes. I have rescued them from tyranny and given them a new lease of life.

I'm the first to light up a fag and start to smoke'



Calvin Klein is just one of the couture labels to be found at Oxfam shops. There is a rapid turnover of designer clothes in charity shops, where outfits sell for a fraction of their original price

Why second-hand is chic

Thrift-shop threads are about making a fashion statement. Bill Frost reports on how the charity shop has become part of the culture of cool

Business has never been better for Britain's charity shops with demand for second-hand chic fast outstripping supply. In the Nineties, the number of charity shops on our high streets has risen by two-thirds to more than 5,000 and turnover has doubled to almost £300 million a year, according to the market research company Mintel. "Every indication is that second-hand clothes buying is growing fast among socio-economic AEs," said a spokeswoman.

Oxfam saw sales increase by 5 per cent last year to £56 million, earning the charity a profit of £15 million. Such is the current level of business, there are plans now to import second-hand designer clothes from Europe.

To the ill-disguised irritation of the National Chamber of Trade, which represents high-street chains, charity shops are given trading advantages. They get relief on business rates and do not have to pay income tax or VAT on donated goods.

The chamber's loss is the bargain hunter's gain. All it takes to create the cheapest of outfits is imagination and the time to sort through the prizes. When the rich and fashionable make mistakes, they do it in style. Imagine splashing out £3,000 on a Versace number and wearing it just once before realising that the colour didn't quite suit. Each dress on the charity shop rail tells a story of rejection: Kenzo, Lacroix, Dior and Chanel bought and abandoned on a whim. Indeed, from Harrogate to Edinburgh, and Oxford to Bath, yesterday's creations are being tossed aside in favour of tomorrow's extravaganzas.

Such profligacy has fuelled Britain's fastest-growing fashion phenomenon — charity-shop chic. Bargain hunters scour the high-street rails now when once they would have recoiled from the stigma of wearing second-hand clothes. The dowdy frocks and dun-coloured jackets have gone

and among those who used to bandy designer labels about, the fashionable names to mention are Sue Ryder, Oxfam and Barnardos. Thrift shops are the pastures new where a cast-off helps to create a wealthier wardrobe.

The model Iris Palmer, who struts the catwalks wearing

clothes. "You are picking up on their experiences, too. If you have on something stinky you bought from a charity shop, just stop and think what kind of sexy time they had wearing it."

Anita Pallenberg, actress, partner of at least three Rolling Stones and reformed junkie



George Melly and Iris Palmer at the launch of Cheap Date

couture clothes, travels far and wide in her search for charity-shop chic. Her happiest hunting ground is the Sue Ryder shop in Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire.

Her latest prize — a stinky red top — cost less than £10, a fraction of the initial price. "I would imagine the original owner paid well over £200 for this and hardly wore it. As you can see, it is almost new."

Ms Palmer's mission is to "spread the word that thrift threads are part of the culture of cool". She has no qualms about wearing other people's

ie, now has a new addition: second-hand style. "It's a bit like taking drugs or drinking. I roam around and get off on the fact that I can find something cheap. Whenever I get that compulsion to make myself feel better, I go to the second-hand shop. The other day I went out at 2pm and at 5pm I was still in that shop, rummaging and talking. It's part of my thing."

When she was the companion of Jagger, Jones or Richards, Ms Pallenberg wore her designer labels once before consigning them to the wardrobe of history. Now she buys from the charity shop and then returns the flock.

Joan Kirk, manager of the Sue Ryder Foundation shop on Kings Road, is almost blasé about her stock. "We can offer a marvelous selection any day of the week — remember that the clothes we are given come from people in Chelsea and Belgravia, an amazing catchment area. They tend only to

have been worn once and are always dry cleaned before being donated.

"Today, I can show you a Jasper Conran skirt (£30, price new £300), Yves Saint Laurent suede trousers (a fraction of the original cost); an Aquascutum dress; a Cerruti man's suit; or an Armani man's suit."

In Oxfam's shop in Kings Road, the tills are ringing as never before as bargain hunters rave the rails. Pat Drever, one of the volunteer counter staff, boasts an embarrassment of designer labels.

"Kenzo, Katherine Hamnett, Nicole Farhi, Edina Ronay, Lagerfeld and Kurt Geiger shoes at £25 — the original purchaser paid ten times that amount. Let's see what else we have... Boss suits for men, Hardie Amies, Thomas Pink shirts."

Obviously prices vary — if you are talking a Bruce Oldfield ballgown, expect to pay about £300 — but everything has been dry cleaned — we don't want any dirty clothes in the shop.

"Designer labels do not hang around for long — there is a very rapid turnover and yet we are not the posh end of Kings Road — the shop is opposite a council estate. We get all sorts here, from Sloanes to people who don't appear to have their bus fare."

Charity style is not one of those London-only fads though, says Lady Ryder, whose foundation runs 573 shops. "We have always aimed to look upmarket, even in the poorest areas. And people are incredibly generous, we have hardly worn designer clothes on the rail all over the place besides the capital: Cheltenham, Harrogate, Aldeburgh and so on."

Cheap Date, a style magazine launched last year, is set to become the thrift chic bible. "If you love second-hand stuff, especially clothes, then this is for you," says the Editor, Kira Joliffe.

"What originally inspired us is the freedom that second-hand buying, or at least getting things cheap, can provide. It's a cliché, but you don't need a lot of money to look sexy, glamorous and cool. We all make some duff decisions, but at least they were cheap. And then there are the real triumphs — just look at this dress I'm wearing."

The figure-hugging choco-

late brown silk evening dress is "to die for," says one female onlooker at the Notting Hill launch party for Cheap Date.

"Well not really," says Kira. "This is a Forties dress, which cost me £20. Originally, it cost about £400. Goodness knows what that is in today's prices but that's what thrift chic is all about — making a fashion statement and buying a bargain all at the same time."

Minnie Welsch, deputy art editor and photographer,

shines in the basement gloom. Her "little red dress" — Sue Ryder, of course — appears to have been made to measure. "This isn't my favourite, though," she says. "I got this amazing Christian Dior green dress for £6 the other day. The original owner paid £600."

"That's the excitement of the hunt — to find a real treasure that has a history. Who knows the fun that the woman who wore this before me may have had? You are wearing a piece of someone's life and that is really exciting. What's more you have only paid a fraction of the price and that's even more exciting."

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TIME

The tough truths of Dearing

David Blunkett on economic realities in further education

Education is this Government's top priority. This is why we are prepared to take the difficult decisions to invest in our future. Since the early 1960s higher education in this country has changed beyond recognition. Thirty years ago, one in 20 young people entered higher education. Today, the figure is one in three. More than half of all students are mature students and just over a third are part-timers. At the same time, public funding per student has fallen by about 25 per cent over the past decade.

Our university system is in crisis. Our competitors in North America and the Far East have more young people going into higher education. Clearly the State should make its contribution and will continue to do so. But it is right, too, that the costs should be shared with those who benefit most, the graduates. The same level of funding for students today as existed in the 1970s would cost the taxpayer £4 billion more per year. If we were to expand access towards a participation rate of 40 per cent, approaching American and Canadian levels, it would cost us an extra £2 billion. Taken together, these demands would add 3p to the basic rate of income tax.

The last Government capped the expansion of higher education and created the present mix of loans, grants and parental contributions. In doing so, they failed to address the financial implications.

However, the Conservatives, with all-party agreement, acknowledged there was a problem and established the Dearing inquiry. His solution and our preferred option — which builds on it — achieve the goals of maintaining quality, increasing access and ensuring that no one is denied entry to higher education because of their financial circumstances. Our solution reflects the graduate's earnings of the future, not the circumstances of today's student.

Everyone has accepted that the status quo is not an option. That is why we have agreed to decisive action.

The Dearing report yesterday recognised that we cannot afford to improve or expand higher education with present funding arrangements. It concluded that students should share both the investment and the advantages which can be gained from higher education.

For that reason the Government accepted Dearing's case for further expansion of access to higher education — and the role that further education can play in this. We welcome proposals for widening participation, including the emphasis on those groups which are under-represented. It is always worth reminding ourselves that adults in further education and part-time students in higher education already pay an average of 25 per cent towards fees and receive virtually no maintenance support. Compared with other countries we offer full-time university students relatively

generous financial support. We have built on Dearing's proposals. Instead of a residual grant, students' living costs will be covered by a maintenance loan of the same value as the current grant and loan package. An additional loan will be available to students equivalent to the tuition fee. We will, however, ensure that the poorest students do not have to pay fees.

We are equally determined that there should be no up-front increase in parental contributions. Our response to Dearing ensures that fees and maintenance taken together do not place an increased burden on middle-income families. Parents at present are expected to contribute up to £2,000 for maintenance.

Top-up tuition fees by individual universities would reduce opportunities for many. They play no part in our proposals.

In order to lessen the impact of repayments in the early years, we believe that they should extend for up to 20 years, depending on the graduate's income, and should be set at an affordable starting point and within a manageable repayment schedule. This will replace the current "mortgage-style" repayments with a fairer system.

We are determined to ensure that there is access to higher education for all those who can benefit from it. Increased access for socio-economic groups D and E has been only half that of those with higher incomes over the past decade. We are equally determined that the quality and standard of teaching will be raised — and we will publish a White Paper on lifelong learning later this year bringing forward proposals in response to the wider Dearing recommendations.

Our plans will also include two other features. First, we will make available a supplementary hardship loan of £250 per year to those who need it. Second, we will consider ways of encouraging people to become teachers or doctors, with the possibility of government bursaries. Other employers will wish to examine similar schemes.

The decisions we took yesterday are tough but fair. Our proposals will mean more money for universities. The Government will ensure that savings are used to improve quality, standards and opportunity for all in further and higher education.

We have been prepared to take difficult decisions. These are proposals from a Government which is prepared to plan ahead for the next 20 years. We know that we cannot defer action to another generation.

Building on the Dearing report we will establish a higher education system that will be good for students, for parents, for the universities, for business and for the future of our nation.

The author is Education and Employment Secretary.



LEADER'S OFFICIAL PORTRAIT (EXCLUSIVE)

Back to 1066 and all that

Labour initiated the first liquidation of empire; now the second has begun

As we approach the end of Labour's first hundred days, many commentators are still adopting the triumphalist mood of early May. That may be a mistake. Two issues have already emerged which could challenge the Government's standing. How this Parliament develops will largely depend on the way these issues work out: they could decide the outcome of the next general election.

The first is economic. If one leaves aside the abortive Labour Government of 1924, every Labour Government has been defeated on economic issues. Labour won the election of 1929 a few months before the Wall Street crash; the electoral catastrophe of 1931 eventually followed. In 1945 Labour won the postwar election; devaluation followed in 1949 and election defeat in 1951. Labour won in 1964 at the top of the Maudling boom of 1964; devaluation came in 1967 and election defeat in 1970. Labour won in 1974 when the Heath-Barber boom was beginning to disintegrate; the IMF arrived in 1976, and election defeat followed in 1979.

Labour tends to be elected at or near the top of the business cycle, not because the electorate is suffering but because it is feeling confident enough to take the Labour risk. As the cycle turns down, the electorate comes to regret its choice; Labour is blamed for the downturn. So far, every Labour Government has seen unemployment higher at the end of its term than it was at the beginning. The 1997 election fits this pattern too well. If May 1 was not the actual top of this business cycle, it was within a few days of it: since the election there have already been three increases in interest rates.

Last Monday three independent economists told the Commons Treasury Select Committee that they thought there was a serious risk of recession next year. Gavin Davies, the chief economist of Goldman Sachs, who is an adviser to Gordon Brown, said that the Bank of England is "risking overkill", though he is himself in favour of further interest rate increases. The Bank is almost certain to push interest rates too high. The first experiment in Bank independence cannot be allowed to fail, at least so far as the Bank is concerned. Success will be measured by the control of the inflationary pressures which undoubtedly exist. If there should be a mild recession in 1998, that will be success from the Bank's

point of view, but soft landings are not easy to achieve. The 3DM pound is already damaging British exports, and threatening jobs.

By the middle of this Parliament unemployment will probably again be on the rise. The overvaluation on Wall Street, and to a lesser extent of the London stock market, may well be followed by a sharp correction. The Conservatives will say: "We left Labour the strongest economy in 50 years, and Labour has ruined it." Labour could pay a high political price for any "overkill" by the Bank.

However the business cycle, or its postwar equivalent after 1945, is the lesser of the two threats. Labour could certainly recover from a mild recession in 1998 and still win comfortably in 2001.

The greater problem is "the question of England". Listening to the committee and report stage debates on the Referendum Bill in the House of Lords, I have been amazed by the insouciance with which the Government has been treating the English reaction to constitutional change.

In August 1947, the Attlee Government gave India independence, subject to partition. It was a butcherly job, presided over with his usual reckless glamour by Mountbatten; it left India with the permanent problem of partition, created a divided Pakistan, which could not hold together, resulted in a million or more deaths in communal riots and marked the effective end of the British Empire. The liquidation took 50 years to complete with the handover of Hong Kong. The process was inevitable, and few parts of it were as badly mishandled as India.

In 1947, people only dimly foresaw that the whole empire would disappear, leaving only Bermuda and a few other islands. In 1956, Eden still fought the Suez campaign to preserve Britain's position in the Middle East; in the 1960s Wilson still wanted to stay "East of Suez". Even those who foresaw that the process would not come to an end before the complete liquidation of empire, assumed that it

would still leave an independent United Kingdom, preserving the Monarchy, the sovereignty of Parliament, and the unity of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. At the same time as the last major Imperial territory has been handed over to China, this assumption of the survival of a core United Kingdom has been called into question.

Scotland is to be given a referendum on a parliament, and Wales on an assembly; the peace talks in Northern Ireland may lead to separation; the divorce and possible remarriage of the Prince of Wales has brought into question the future of the Monarchy and the Church of England; the House of Commons has sacrificed much of its power to the nations of the United Kingdom.

Brussels, while the House of Lords is about to lose its hereditary peers. It took 50 years to liquidate the empire but it looks as if it might take only as many months to determine the liquidation of the United Kingdom.

The economic and social forces which undermine the nation state may now be so strong that the disintegration of the United Kingdom is as unavoidable as the liquidation of the empire itself. Yet one cannot expect the English people to like it. One would have to go back before 1066 to reach a time when the English nation was as small, as isolated or as weak as it may shortly become. However this process may be judged as part of British history — and British history may be coming to an end — it is, at least potentially, a great catastrophe for the English.

When they realise what is happening — if it does happen — they may be very angry. I have recently been reading an excellent new book on contemporary Russia by Peter Truscott, who is a Labour Euro-MP and a member of the delegation for relations with the Russian Federation. He calls his book *Russia First*; his thesis is that the breakup of the Soviet Union has created a new Russian nationalism. That seems a natural reaction. If the

English find that the liquidation of empire has been followed by an unforeseen and rapid liquidation of the United Kingdom itself, we can reasonably expect an "England First" reaction here. Indeed, such a reaction can already be seen in the Conservative Party, which now has no Member of Parliament elected from outside England, and therefore no non-English United Kingdom presence.

I am quite sympathetic to the new Labour Government, and had become disillusioned with the John Major Administration. Yet Tony Blair's Government, certainly as one sees it in the House of Lords, seems to have little sense of the scale of the constitutional problems. These are revolutionary issues. No one can be sure that the second liquidation will not be far more explosive than the first.

One has to look at the broad range of possibilities in the near future. In ten years' time the United Kingdom may have survived, or England might be separated from the other nations of the United Kingdom, though perhaps not from Wales. England may be just a province of Europe, or might have left the European Union. The House of Commons may be reduced to the role of a provincial assembly, or might have recovered its full sovereignty but over a much smaller country. The Queen may still be on the throne, or Prince Charles might be reigning, with or without Queen Camilla, or he might have renounced the throne in favour of Prince William, or England might be a republic. The Church of England may have been disestablished. The House of Lords may have some hereditary peers, or none, or might have been democratised or even abolished. The character, constitution and identity of England may have been wholly changed.

The Government — itself predominantly Scottish — does not yet realise how revolutionary these issues are for the English. Nor is it emotionally or historically prepared to deal with them. This is not a bad Government, but equally it is not yet a mature one. It is approaching one of the climatic points of English history more in the spirit of the young Rattigan than the old Shakespeare. "Anyone for devolution?" is not an adequate question, particularly when the English will never even be asked it.

A tale of two chambers

Magnus Linklater

asks: will Scots flee Westminster?

I still do love the clubbable side," wrote Alan Clark in 1985. "The swinging studded Pugin doors which exclude those uninitiated; the abundance of facilities; the deeply comfortable leather chairs at the 'Silent' end of the library, where one can have a sleep as deep and refreshing as under the eaves of the Chaler Caroline." Ah, the discreet charm of the House of Commons, the best club in London. The young Jeremy Thorpe loved the fact that you still had a hook to hang your sword on; the older Jo Grimond confessed that on a good day it was the most exciting place in the world to be.

But if power has been chopped from beneath your feet, is any of that enough to seduce a would-be backbencher, however awestruck? From today the prospect becomes a harsh reality for any MP at Westminster who represents a Scottish constituency. The White Paper on Scottish devolution will go much further than the friendly prospectus for a Welsh assembly which we saw earlier this week. It represents a real tilt of power from London to Edinburgh: the ability to frame legislation and raise taxes will make the new Parliament more than just a talking-shop. Most arguments hitherto have been about the likely impact on English MPs. But the real losers will be the existing Scottish Members.

Once a Scottish Parliament is in place, their ability to effect change where it really matters — in their local constituencies — will be all but abolished. Anything to do with hospitals, schools, social services, the law, bureaucracy, planning, will be removed from their sphere of influence. What will be the point of lobbying your Westminster MP if the minister whose ear he claims to have no longer has jurisdiction where it matters? Why bother to travel to London to campaign for legal change if the power to do so is in the Scottish capital? Your MP may still be able to join in debates on Britain's economic policy or foreign affairs. But are these the areas where his voice will make any significant difference? He will become an increasingly emasculated figure, for whom his local electorate might not even bother to turn out in significant numbers.

The House of Lords is a good example of this potential power vacuum. The new Scottish Parliament will (to begin with at any rate) have no upper chamber. There are no plans for a revising body, and the Lords will thus lose the ability to amend or correct Scottish legislation. For Scottish peers this is a major constitutional dilemma: it leaves them, after all, with not a lot to do. Some of them believe there will have to be some substitute, a "House of Lords" has been mooted, drawing on the Scottish great and good. "I don't see how the Scottish Parliament can revise itself," says Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, a former Scottish Office minister. But, for the moment at least, that is the way it will be.

This shift in the balance of power should go a long way towards answering what has so far been seen as "the Robin Cook question". This asks whether the Foreign Secretary, as an example of a Cabinet minister representing a Scottish constituency, would be prepared to give up his Commons seat and sit in a Scottish Parliament. In fact, Mr Cook is not a good example. His present post will continue to have direct relevance for Scotland, whether arguing for the sales of beef in Brussels, or altering the terms of GATT in Washington. He is better placed than most to represent the interests of his country.

More relevant might be the case, say, of Helen Liddell, her foot firmly on the first rung of ministerial promotion at the Treasury. Would the Economic Secretary trade the Commons dispatch box for the uncertainty of an Edinburgh Parliament? Or take even that great Westminster democrat, Mr. Tam Dalyell. If, despite his very best endeavours, a Scottish Parliament were finally to be introduced, would he still feel he was fulfilling his duties as an MP if he could no longer raise with the minister the state of the waiting lists at Linlithgow hospital?

My own view is that, far from being a drawback, this is a positive advantage. For a Scottish Parliament to succeed, it needs the best and the brightest, and they will only be drawn to a forum where they can exercise real power. If that is Edinburgh rather than Westminster, so much the better. But there could be another solution — the right to represent a constituency both in Westminster and in Scotland; dual membership, in other words, for at least a proportion of Scottish MPs.

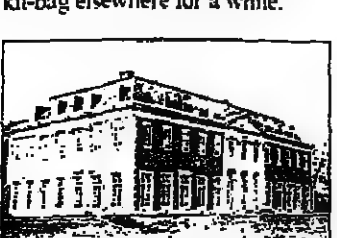
The matter will not, I imagine, be addressed in the White Paper. It has been ruled out by the Labour Party. But it has a certain logic to it, and over a longer period may well be seen to have merit — it might be at least half the answer to the West Lothian question.

Like so many of the more pressing issues which will finally be exposed today, this one will not be resolved immediately. Sooner or later, however, it will have to be addressed. The deep peace of the Commons library is no substitute for the hurly-burly of political power.

House hunt

WITH the announcement of Phil Lader as the next American Ambassador to London, staff at the embassy are cranking up their search for a house for him when he arrives. Brochures have been ordered and friends consulted about finding a suitable place.

Previous Ambassadors have lived in Winfield House, in Regent's Park, built by the Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton in 1936 and given to America for use by its envoys. It needs an overhaul, however, so Lader must dump his kit-bag elsewhere for a while.



Closing: Winfield House

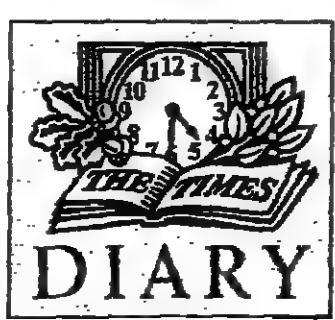
The embassy is not ruling out putting him in Brixton, Clapham, even Battersea, but is adamant about one particular address: Kensington Palace Gardens, home to the French and Russian Ambassadors.

dors, among others. "We will certainly not be renting anywhere near the other residences — the US does not believe in spending that sort of money," said their press officer. A dignified town house with a decent garden in St John's Wood would be ideal.

The last American Ambassador to arrive when Winfield House was being done-up was Walter Annenberg in 1969. Though he went on to become hugely popular, when he presented his credentials to the Queen in front of television cameras his grammar fell to pieces. He said he would be moving into his embassy "subject, of course, to some of the discomforts as a result of a need for, uh, elements of refurbishment and rehabilitation". Lader, a close friend of Clinton, can be relied upon for a snappier soundbite.

Salad days

BEFORE he set about rebuilding the creaking structures of the Conservative Party yesterday, William Hague will have checked his notes from his last big reorganisational effort. In 1988, he was one of a four-



man team recruited from the management consultants McKinsey to launch the Campaign for Oxford to raise funds for the university. "He was extremely easy to get along with," says Dr Henry Drucker, director of the Campaign for Oxford at the time. "But every time he left the room, his colleagues would say 'that guy is going to be a Conservative Prime Minister one day'." Apart from the nauseating remarks, Hague wrote the campaign's mission statement and was regarded as a success. To date, the campaign has raised £342 million, the sort of small-change the Tories could use.

There may be an answer to the Tories' conundrum of whether or not to put Michael Heseltine, MP for Henley, up for a peerage. John Major is keen to have him honoured for an immense perfor-

mance in the last months of the Tory Government, yet promoting him to the Lords would precipitate a by-election which the Tories could do without for a year or two. What about a knighthood, then? This would please Heseltine's wife, Anne, who would become a Lady, while Sir Michael, knight of the shires, could wait for a more convenient time to move upstairs.

Over and out

FOLLOWING news of the abolition of the annual cricket match be-



"I've finally worked out how to play Warne"

tween Radley and Marlborough, fears are growing for an even more hallowed institution: the Eton-Harrow clash at Lords. This year the match was held after term was over and for the first time not a ball was bowled, due to rain.

Attendance figures are desperately low and parents no longer buy up the corporate boxes, but it may be Lords' crowded fixture-list which finally kills it off. John Jamieson, assistant secretary of cricket at Lords, is worried. "Shorter terms and school exams make it very difficult to fit it in at the height of the season," he explains. He will do his best to fit next year's encounter in once the Test dates are available, but after that the match may have to be played at the schools themselves.

Denied entry to the Cave du Roi nightclub in St Tropez recently was the British singer, George Michael. On introducing himself to the bouncer, Michael was told: "I remember you from the 80s. You're just going to have to wait until you're a name again." The bouncer looked very pleased with his job.

Saints alive

THERE will be an all-star clerical line-up at St Peter and St Paul



Purple patch: Mary Louden

Church, in Wantage, on the Saturday after next for the wedding of Mary Louden, 30, author of *Revelations: The Clergy Questioned*, and Andrew St George, 35, another writer. The Right Rev Hugh Montefiore, the former Bishop of Birmingham, will conduct the service, while Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, will be giving the address, decked out in frock-coat and gaiters.

There is no risk of the dog-collars putting a dampener on the reception. "Hugh and Robert are a very ribald pair," says Louden; "so I'm hoping for plenty of bad behaviour."

P.H.S



PRICE OF KNOWLEDGE

A way forward to higher and higher education

Sir Ron Dearing has produced an admirable report and David Blunkett has shown real courage in extending its reach. In his immense and impressive tome, Sir Ron has offered a fine analysis of the challenges that face higher education in this country. In his response yesterday the Secretary of State caught the spirit of necessary change, showing a clear acceptance that the status quo is not an option, that the present level of funding means ever declining standards and that radical action is required.

The problems are manifold. New degrees have been introduced without reference to their standing in the outside world. While this may have been an interesting experience for those who devised the curriculums, they have been less rewarding for those who sat the courses. External examination arrangements have also left much to be desired and require closer scrutiny. If universities aspire to increased resources then they should be obliged to provide better value for them. That was the central and much needed message offered yesterday.

The inevitable interest in the question of student finance has pushed to the margins many other important aspects of Sir Ron's report. That is an understandable but unfortunate outcome. The stress placed on the importance of knowledge — and the provision of flexible qualifications — in an increasingly international context is entirely apt. The committee correctly states that individual ability — and not the short-term calculations of the Treasury — should determine how many young (and older) people enter higher education.

The major dispute between the committee and Mr Blunkett has concerned the funding question. Sir Ron recommended that the present system of student maintenance — 50 per cent loan and 50 per cent grant or parental contribution — should remain but that an annual tuition fee of £1,000 should be charged to all who enter higher education. Mr Blunkett has responded with the bold proposal that grants should be abolished

outright in favour of loans but that tuition fees should be related to parental income. The difference between the two packages is superficially subtle but very significant.

The balance of argument favours Mr Blunkett's position. The present mixture of grant, loan, and parental generosity is an unfortunate hybrid. A single loan-based structure would be much more coherent. Furthermore, as Sir Ron concedes, the Dearing proposals would not by themselves produce the resources required to quell the current crisis. The Blunkett scheme clearly would. There seems little point in undertaking an exercise like this and travelling only some of the distance. Softened at the edges by extending the repayments period as Mr Blunkett suggests, the Secretary of State's formula represents a reasonable effort at finding an inevitably elusive balance.

There are two areas where Mr Blunkett should look further. In his statement he expressed outright opposition to certain institutions charging additional or "top-up" tuition fees. Greater flexibility might permit him to tackle the present financial advantage enjoyed by Oxford and Cambridge without threatening their collegiate or tutorial systems. He should also consider reform of the current access fund arrangements to ensure that prospective students from the poorest backgrounds are not discouraged. The allure of higher salaries later in life should logically serve as sufficient inducement in itself, but it may sometimes need some short-term assistance.

A sensible Conservative response would have been broadly supportive while suggesting that the Government went further still. Instead Stephen Dorrell, in a bizarre and unbelievable performance, appeared determined to place himself to the left of Ken Livingstone. That is regrettable. The Dearing committee was created by cross-party consensus and should be considered in that light. The Blunkett package will not be universally popular but it is the best practical means of maintaining our universities.

BUSINESS BEFORE PLEASURE

Hague offers organisation first, philosophy later

William Hague yesterday promised that the Tory party would, in future, listen, not lecture to the voters. In a careful speech which avoided premature policy prescriptions or early attempts to articulate "the vision thing", the Tory leader concentrated on the necessary lessons his party must learn from Labour's victory. Mr Hague was unapologetic in his admission of the scale of defeat and the Tories' own responsibility for their fate. He was also honest in his outline of the internal reform that is needed.

If the Tories are to become relevant again, let alone a threat to the Government, their recovery must be driven, as Mr Hague conceded, by ideas. But even the most glorious intellectual renaissance will be insufficient to bring the party to power if its structures are not overhauled first. In choosing to concentrate on organisation before ideology Mr Hague may disappoint some diehards. But he is making the necessary logistical preparations before a broad strategy can be set.

Mr Hague's determination to modernise his party by democratising its structures was one of the main themes of his leadership campaign and a project which *The Times* supported strongly. During the course of that campaign the grassroots demonstrated a keen appetite for a better say and Mr Hague, acknowledging the imperfection of the method that brought him to power, promised to offer himself as soon as practicable for endorsement. Yesterday he announced that, this autumn, party members will be given the chance to approve his election and support his reforms.

Cynics, never an under-represented minority in the parliamentary Tory party, have caricatured the "election" as a coronation

and any vote in support of reform as a flimsy mandate for a blank cheque. They are people who will not take yes for an answer. Mr Hague is responding to the clearly expressed wishes of his party in the most effective manner possible. The validation of his leadership this autumn will not be as effectively democratic an exercise as a competitive poll which gave every member a vote; but it is a welcome stride in that direction. Future leadership elections will be transparently democratic and this exercise is evidence of the leader's good faith.

The electorate to which Mr Hague will submit himself, and his reforms, is inevitably shrunken. The leader of a party which once boasted more than two million members and now has nearer a tenth of that number speaks with less authority and has far fewer sources of native wisdom than his predecessors. Mr Hague chose yesterday to make an issue of the changes he hopes to make to his party's internal machinery. He has no option but to emphasise how inclusive he hopes it will become.

As well as a sincere attempt to attract more female members and candidates from ethnic minorities Mr Hague served notice that structural change would go beyond personnel and presentation. His proposals to discipline MPs who bring scorn on the party and his willingness to place party funding on a more open basis should help ensure that a party which had almost forgotten how to say sorry has less to apologise for in the future. It will be several months before the precise mechanisms can be put in place to give effect to Mr Hague's intentions but he has, so far, shown a welcome seriousness of intent in learning from his party's humiliation.

SERIOUS OR SMIRK

The truths of political portraiture that never die

A necessary, if hardly radical, part of Mr Hague's campaign for party membership is his official photograph which was released on Tuesday. The Prime Minister too chose this week to promulgate a new image of himself from the camera of that great contemporary icon-maker, Lord Snowdon.

Once upon a time the official oil painting was the way to make Britons see their leaders as their leaders wanted to be seen. This island's history has been admirably marked by portraiture. As well as using such home-bred masters as Gainsborough, the rich and powerful have profited from the skills of painters from abroad, Holbein, Van Dyck and Kneller, who over the centuries made their way to Britain to establish their fame — and make their sitters feel secure.

The traditional painted portrait could be so easily tinted by the vanities of its sitter. Oliver Cromwell may have insisted on "warts and all", but most preferred flattery. Sometimes the deception went too far — as when Holbein's depiction of Anne of Cleves enticed Henry VIII to wed "a Flanders mare". Generally customers were happy

But later the portrait came to reflect the responses of the artist as much as the requirements of the subject. In the 20th century, expression and interpretation predominated. Personality was more exposed than protected. In his 1974 portrait of

Harold Wilson, Ruskin Spear subjected the enigmatic Prime Minister to a famously satirical scrutiny, depicting him wreathed in a cloud of pipe smoke. Last year many were shocked by the wrinkled visage and tuberos fingers in Antony Williams's portrait of the Queen. The outcome of a commission was too often unpredictable for the wary sitter. The fate of Graham Sutherland's portrait of Churchill became a lesson to artists and subjects alike.

Now it is the studio photograph that has become the chosen medium for those who want to exert a more dexterous control. The photographer's art is a wily one. The cameraman can combine cosmetics and celluloid to turn almost anyone into a fashion model — and often does.

Mr Blair and Mr Hague have been less artful in their intentions than some; but still their images are meticulously controlled. The Prime Minister, aware of his tendency to present a toothy grin to the camera, has now opted for a studied earnestness. The Leader of the Opposition, who is sometimes — perhaps wrongly — thought humourless, is here seen tentatively smiling. According to Dickens' dictum in *Nicholas Nickleby*, "there are only two styles of portrait painting, the serious and the smirk." Our modern portraitists have ensured this week that some traditions never die.

Letter and spirit of abortion law

From the Chief Executive of Marie Stopes International

Sir, Mr Nicholas Beale, the Reverend Dr J. C. Polkinghorne and Professor Lord Winston misinterpret the terms and provision of the 1967 Abortion Act when they claim (letter, July 17) that legislators clearly intended that "abortion should not be performed if there is no genuine substantial risk to the physical or mental health of the mother or children" (see also letters, July 21).

The principal provision — the so-called "social clause" — under which the vast majority of abortions in this country are carried out, actually provides the less onerous test that the risk to the mental or physical health of the woman or any existing child of the family will be greater should the pregnancy continue. There is no requirement to establish any "substantial" risk at all.

All abortions — including those performed at Marie Stopes International's six new day-care units — are carried out in accordance with the 1967 Act as amended, and within the letter and spirit of that law. But the fact that three pre-eminent men can apply their own more stringent moral and ethical interpretation to the legislation, thereby contributing to the atmosphere of public confusion about what is or is not legally permissible, makes the case for reform more pressing than ever.

The uncertainty which currently prevails, and which does nothing but increase the hardship and emotional trauma experienced by women facing unplanned pregnancies, could be resolved simply and justly: by the introduction of new legislation which provides women, rather than doctors, with a genuine right to choose abortion in the first 12 weeks of gestation.

Yours sincerely,
TIM BLACK,
Chief Executive,
Marie Stopes International,
153-157 Cleveland Street, W1,
July 22.

From Sir Anthony Alment

Sir, There is, indeed, reasonable concern about the number of women seeking abortion ("Abortions rise for first time in five years", report, July 23), and whether more readily accessible facilities might reduce for a few the time to reflect on their decision.

However, for the large number of us who, over many years, conscientiously and actively carried out abortions in the terms and spirit of the 1967 Act, the weight of numbers of women meeting its criteria has been an eloquent indicator of the effects of social stress from faulty personal and family relationships. Indeed, it has often seemed that the various barriers and delays placed in the way of their ready relief were all too often the price of conscience exacted by the uninformed or uninvolvement.

By all means let us review the means and the access to them, to give women greater security, and to ensure that children are born into the care of parents who will want and will raise them. But we should be spared yet another attack on one of the most significant pieces of legislation of our generation.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY ALMENT
(President),
Royal College of Obstetricians
and Gynaecologists, 1978-81,
Winston House,
Boughton, Northampton,
July 20.

Famine in Korea

From the Director of Programmes of Children's Aid Direct

Sir, Your report (July 17) on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was extremely timely.

The growing stories of near famine for a huge number of people are at last being substantiated by the fact that complete desperation has driven a proud and isolated Government to allow media access to areas not usually visited by foreigners.

The historical and current political situation makes the issue of foreign food aid and other assistance a complicated one.

Following two donations of aid last year, Children's Aid Direct is about to commence a programme of food distribution to 17,000 children in Suncheon City to the north of Pyongyang.

That we are able to do so is the result of a grant from the European Union (European Community Humanitarian Office) and the fact that we feel a responsibility to respond to humanitarian needs wherever they arise.

The children of North Korea are the innocent victims of a situation of which they know nothing and which they certainly cannot influence. Thousands of them will die or suffer appalling illness and malnourishment unless they receive external assistance.

We very much hope that the country's political isolation will not mean that they cannot look to the world community for support and assistance at a time of desperate need.

Yours faithfully,
MARK O. MCKEOWN,
Director of Programmes,
Children's Aid Direct,
82 Caversham Road,
Reading, Berkshire,
July 17.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Radio 3's populist policy under fire

From Mr Duncan Rutter

Sir, Richard Morrison ("Radio 3 falls for populist baloney", Arts, July 19) may be right in suggesting that "lack of bottle in tackling the Musicians' Union" is responsible for the BBC's fiscal insouciance in maintaining orchestras where local musical communities already cherish their own. But if so the Government must surely look critically at the way the Corporation spends a licence income given for the most part uncritically by television viewers.

Is the Musicians' Union to get away with forcing an apparently captive customer to buy something he doesn't necessarily want where the National Union of Mineworkers failed?

It is not just the quality of Radio 3 programmes that appears to be paying the price for BBC orchestral over-manning. The listener also wants to hear rather more of the traditionally-based orchestras of this country as an alternative to the BBC's progressive monopoly.

Has any listener research been conducted on so critical a fiscal issue? If so, what was the outcome?

Yours faithfully,
DUNCAN RUTTER,
50 Kew Green, Richmond, Surrey,
July 20.

From Professor John Cusken

Sir, While there may be grounds for concern about the programming policies of Radio 3 and its increasingly populist content and style of presentation, for Richard Morrison to describe the BBC's orchestras as "five workaday bands" and as "a pointless duplication of resources" is insulting and indefensible — witness the excellent and versatile BBC Philharmonic in Manchester, one of the finest of all our orchestras and one of international standing.

Mr Morrison's suggestion that the BBC should sink its resources into "one truly world-class flagship ensemble", presumably in London, might save the BBC money and right assuage Mr Morrison's nostalgia for a return to the time when Radio 3 was "the envy of the world"; but the

unashamedly serious nature of classical music needs as much live exposure as possible.

For today's composers, the loss of five independent orchestras would further reduce the possibilities of having his or her large-scale works performed in front of an audience. It would belittle the remarkable achievements of these orchestras in the interpretation of major repertoire, and it would deny audiences new discoveries of all types of music in which the BBC plays a leading role.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN CUSKEN,
The University of Manchester,
Department of Music,
Denmark Road, Manchester M13,
July 21.

From Mr Nicholas J. Zelle

Sir, Nicholas Kenyon ("Radio 3's big cheese bites back", Arts, July 23) claims to "meet the needs of the serious classical music audience we have identified" — an audience which "has changed hugely in the last few years. It's larger but more volatile, sophisticated but less knowledgeable than it used to be. It wants to learn."

Perhaps this is a false premise and the root of all the problems that we listeners have to endure. Mr Kenyon's catalogue of "what we will be able to expect" reads like an apologist for Channel 5. The jargon he uses — "award-winning, prize-winning" — smacks of Americanism and could refer to too many. Titles like *Morning Collection* and *Sounding the Century* are cringe-making. And he can pat himself on the back as much as he likes by claiming to be "excellent and distinctive" but who else is he kidding?

All is not lost. Radio 3 has hung on to its commendable live music policy and its patronage of musicians. But, while it has gone down market, it still fails to attract a larger share of the audience. Oh for the return of old-fashioned BBC style.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS J. ZELLE,
13-15 Gloucester Street, SW1,
July 22.

EU and Estonia

From Mr Kevin Probert

Sir, Integrating Soviet-era *gdastar-better* into Estonian society is indeed a problem, but Dr Graham Smith (letter, July 22) is wrong to accuse the Government of denying them social rights.

Whether they are Russian citizens or stateless persons, they may live and work in Estonia, enter and leave the country, and even vote in local elections. Citizenship is required only to vote in parliamentary elections and serve in the army. Russians, Estonians and others live peacefully side by side — in contrast to Northern Ireland.

The evil wrought by Soviet occupation of Estonia was inflicted over decades: as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, it has left a legacy of ecological, infrastructural and human destruction that will take more decades to repair. The people of Estonia are working hard to bring their economy and living standards up to the level of their Scandinavian neighbours.

A common culture

From Mr Loukas N. Kazamias

Sir, The article by Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport ("Ministry of all the talents", July 15), was very much to the point of his department's new name and focus, as well as its significance to the economy.

The one flaw in the structure of his "task force" has to be the presence of only six top executives from commerce and industry. Such a body should also be open to contributions from other, less high-profiled, entrepreneurs, utilising an all-round spectrum of commerce and industry and thus giving the new name new dimensions and real "roots". Other government departments could follow suit. A coalition of government and business is paramount for a better tomorrow.

Yours faithfully,
L. N. KAZAMIAS,
57 Wynchgate, Southgate, N14.

Abbey statues

From Professor Emeritus Paul Foster

Sir, In a letter on restoration work at Westminster Abbey (July 12; see also letters, July 19, 23), James Dunnett writes of his regret at the "present divorce between artists and craftsmen" and claims that to ensure the vitality appropriate to the site the sculpting of lifelike figures for the empty niches at the west entrance should be given to artists. A similar distinction to this, but in connection with a mural, led Bishop George Bell in 1954 to sit in his own Consistory Court and deliver what has become known as the Goring Judgment.

In essence Bell argued that creative work in service of the Church was designed "either to edify the beholder or to assist... worship" but that in both cases the creator would be dependent upon "inspiration... in order to attain the excitement and heightened perception which should be inherent in the final work".

It was this judgment that released

They know they cannot untwist in a day what was twisted over 50 years.

Yours sincerely,
KEVIN PROBERT
(UK resident in Estonia since 1991),
BK Group,
Laki 12, EE0006 Tallinn, Estonia.

From Mr Simon Cave

Sir, A knowledge of the host country's language is a very common prerequisite for citizenship throughout the world. After over 50 years' subjugation to a hated foreign invader, is it any wonder that the Estonians feel so strongly about their language, which — especially as it is not a Slavonic tongue — is such a potent symbol of their national identity?

Some shop windows in Tallinn sum up feelings very succinctly: opening hours are given in Estonian, while closing times are shown in Russian.

Yours etc,
SIMON CAVE,
Watergate,
34 Ham Common, Richmond, Surrey,
July 23.

From Mr Kelvin Nel

Sir, The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport deserves our praise for realising that his "new" department needed not only a change of name but of purpose and direction as well. However, I trust that both he and his "high-profile" task force will take account of the many more "low-profile" members of the public who popularise and use our culture, media and sport.

Will Joe Public be regularly informed and consulted on future proposals and developments?

If one or two representatives of the public were actually on this or any other task force, we might have more confidence that the conclusions reached came from the nation, and not just the "experts".

Sincerely,
KELVIN NEL,
3 Leamington Road,
Southend-on-Sea, Essex,
July 15.

the Church from commissioning the mediocre either in the name of liturgical propriety or, as was then current, in a misplaced belief that the best art should achieve a literal representation of a biblical text.

Today, many artists are proud to emphasise the craft elements in their art and there are many practitioners of a craft who possess a vision as powerful as that held by any artist.

If there is to be a debate of the kind suggested, I would prefer the terms used to be those of inspiration, of vision, and mystery. Or is that asking too much?

Yours sincerely,
PAUL FOSTER,
Chichester Institute of Higher Education, Bishop Otter Campus,
Chichester, West Sussex,
July 20.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046, e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

No 'jokers' as the voice of London

From Mr Gerald Isaaman

Sir, The policy somersault of the Tories in deciding to accept the proposal for radical changes to London's municipal government (report, July 18) is welcome as far as it goes which, alas, is not very far at all. But, given the collapse of Tory representation in the capital at the general election, it is indeed sad to see that you give valuable space to publish photographs of three Conservatives — Lord Archer, David Mellor and Steven Norris — suggesting that they may fulfil the vital new role of mayor.

The last thing we need are prominent politicians from a party which has just been comprehensively rejected by the electorate. That we need a charismatic figure is accepted, but that is but one of the qualifications which a primary election, when the time comes, will perhaps decide.

Much has happened to London's disadvantage since the then Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, vindictively abolished the GLC. Much has happened since I suggested in a letter (October 30, 1991) that the subsequent void might be replaced by a metropolitan mayor to provide a true voice for London — one, too, with an efficient, strategic back-up organisation that actually has the power to create necessary change.

The daily chaos on London's Tube system provides abundant evidence. If any is required, of the social addiction of which the Tories are guilty, and for which they have paid the price in electoral disaster. But, please, do not offer us any political jokers to put right such an outrageous wrong. London deserves much better than that.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD ISAAMAN,
Garrick Club,
15 Garrick Street, WC2,
July 21.

Heritage undermined

From the Secretary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Sir, Your report (July 8) on the likely damage to Lord Byron's house, Newstead Abbey, from coal mining highlights an indefensible gap in listed building law. A coal mine first opened before 1948 can continue expanding underground even if this results in damaging or destroying historic buildings on the surface, however important or rare the building.

In theory no building or monument in a traditional mining area is safe. The only requirement is that the mining company must pay for the historic building to be reconstructed subsequently. However carefully this work is undertaken, much of the historic integrity and value of the building will inevitably be lost.

All mines opened after 1948 are subject to planning controls, and there is no reason why older ones should continue to be exempt.

We hope the Government will act quickly to block this dangerous loophole in the law.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP VENNING,
Secretary, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings,
37 Spital Square, E1,
July 17.

Ban on mobile phones

From Mr Hugh Proctor

Sir, Perhaps Michael Fabricant's Private Member's Bill, to be introduced on July 24, should include censure on the list of places where the use of mobile phones is banned or at least restricted (report, July 21).

As an Anglican reader I arrived at our local crematorium a couple of weeks ago to conduct a funeral service to find the preceding one, that of a Chinese gentleman, still in progress. Towards the end of it, a mobile phone went off in the congregation and the owner left his seat and stood in the back corner of the chapel talking loudly in what I assume was one of the Chinese languages (with the occasional "yes", "no" and "OK") whilst the service continued. Members of the congregation turned, scowled and "shushed" which only persuaded the perpetrator to turn his back and talk a bit louder.

A hefty young man then sprang from his seat, grabbed the talker by the shoulders and none too gently threw him out through the side door. Perhaps a fitting response in other places?

Yours faithfully,
HUGH PROCTOR,
4 Dovecote Lane,
Beeston, Nottingham.
hproctor@proweb.co.uk
July 21

Bright and early

From Professor J. L. Wilson

Sir, I have just received *prima facie* evidence that Sir Ron Dearing is out of touch with the world of higher education.

Interviewed this morning on the *Today* programme at 7.45am, in the long vacation, he optimistically uttered the words: "May I say this to the students that are listening..."

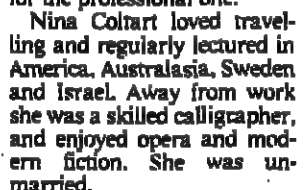
Yours faithfully,
J. L. WILSON,
Wholeyway, Harlow, Cambridge,
July 23.

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN IRVINE

In his subsequent postwar career, he inspired confidence and respect among "all arms" commanders and staffs for his balanced, down-to-earth judgments, integrity and high personal standards. He was well known for his bonhomie and enjoyment of life. Moreover, he and his wife were extraordinarily generous in their entertainment of colleagues and subordinates alike.

He married Mary McNicol Cossar in 1941. They had a 24-hour honeymoon before he left for the Middle East. They were not reunited until after the end of the war. She survives him, together with their daughter.

On qualifying, Coltart held various psychiatric posts in the National Health Service, notably at the North Middlesex and Claybury Hospitals. She was analysed by Elizabeth Rosenfeld, who had assisted the Freud family's exodus from Vienna. In 1964 she qualified as an associate member of the British Psycho-Analytical Society, becoming a



Ron Berry had never enjoyed good health, and in later years he was plagued by osteoarthritis. His spirit, nevertheless, remained indomitable. He had two sons and three daughters. They and his wife all survive him.

huge

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The Note further alleges that it results from the confessions of the perpetrators of the Sarajevo outrage that the assassinations were planned at Belgrade, that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided were given to them by Servian officers and officials belonging to an associ-

In view of these circumstances the Note states that it is no longer possible for the Monarchy to maintain the attitude of expectant forbearance hitherto observed, or to tolerate the machinations which it alleges to have been hatched at Belgrade against the territory of the Monarchy. It is therefore compelled to demand from the Serbian Government a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda, and that it will no longer permit such machina-

"The history of recent years, and in particular the painful events of June 28 last, have shown the existence of Servia of a subversive movement with the object of detaching a part of Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy. The movement, which had its birth under the eyes of the Servian Government, has had consequences on both sides of the Servian frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism and a series of outrages and murders..."

THE TIMES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY JULY 24 1997

'Black hole' inquiry rejected by SFO

By JON ASHWORTH

THE Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has decided not to investigate the events at NatWest Markets that gave rise to a £90 million "black hole" linked to derivatives mispricing.

The SFO said that the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), which regulates City firms and individuals, was better placed to examine the wider implications of the case. An investigation with a view to a criminal prosecution was not justified. The public interest would be "more appropriately satisfied" if the matter were dealt with through regulation.

Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant, and Linklaters & Paines, the law firm, concluded an independent report last month, pinning the blame for most of the losses on Kyriacos Papouis, a former NatWest interest rate options trader.

Mr. Papouis incurred trading losses on mark and sterling options, then hid them by creating false profits. The losses, and mispricing went undetected for two years, prompting questions about NatWest's operations and internal controls.

Martin Owen resigned as chief executive of NatWest Markets after the report's publication. The SFO said any inquiry would be restricted to a narrow area. By contrast, City regulators had the power to deal with all the individuals concerned and assess wider questions of controls and supervision.

It was felt that the particular complexities usually associated with an SFO case were absent. In addition, there were no difficult areas of law to be considered and no requirement for highly involved investigatory accounting work.

NatWest welcomed the SFO's decision, saying it would end unhelpful speculation. It had co-operated fully with the preliminary SFO inquiry. The SFA is understood to be looking at the case, although there has been no announcement of a formal inquiry.

Six managers quit NatWest last month. NatWest has taken steps to improve controls and pledged to continue to upgrade systems and control infrastructure on the investment banking side.

Trouble had been brewing at NatWest since December 1996, when Mr. Papouis left after four years as an interest rate options trader. In March, NatWest announced that a £77 million "black hole" had been uncovered; the figure subsequently rising to £90 million.

Mr. Papouis has declined to comment on allegations that he covered up losses and created false profits over a two-year period.

Commentary, page 27

Sterling at eight-year high as windfall cash reaches the high street

Shopping boom threat set to put rates at 7%

By ALASDAIR MURRAY AND PHILIP BASSETT

THE City is braced for another interest rate rise after retail sales data pointed to a 1980s-style high street spending boom.

High street sales increased by an annual rate of 5.4 per cent in June as windfall related spending boosted sales of big ticket items.

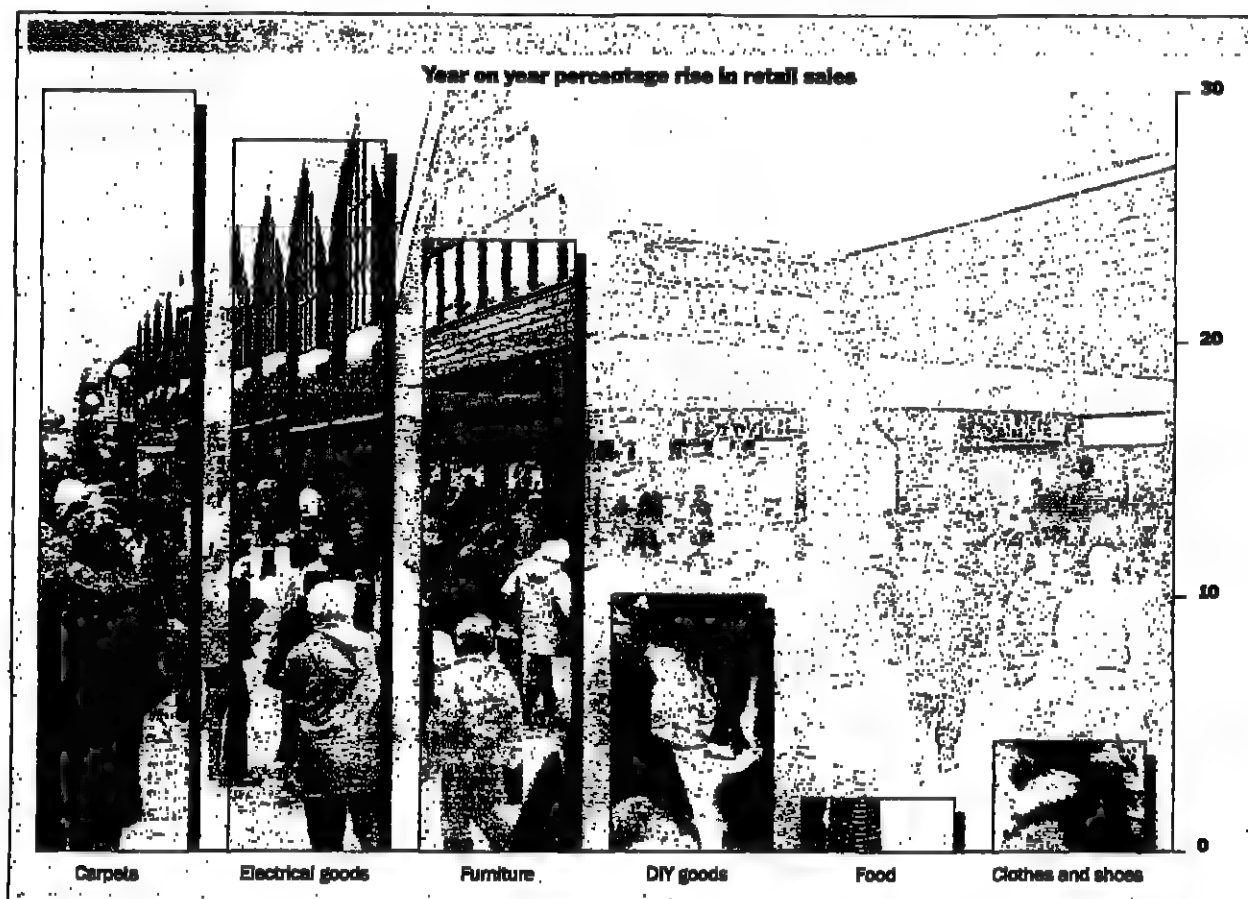
Market speculation that rates will rise to 7 per cent next month sent the pound soaring on foreign exchanges. The pound climbed to DM3.0578 — its highest level since September 1989 — before slipping in late trade to close up three pence on the day at DM3.0712. Sterling's trade weighted index also touched an eight-year high of 106.7, before falling slightly to close up 0.9 on the day at 106.6.

The stock market continued its rebound as Wall Street climbed higher following Alan Greenspan's positive comments on Tuesday. The FTSE 100 jumped 85 points in early trading but finished just 27.8 higher at 4,824.5.

New evidence that the high level of the pound is beginning to seriously hurt exporters emerged in the latest British Chambers of Commerce quarterly survey that showed export orders slumping to a five-year low.

Economists said the new data coupled with the latest rise in the pound would heighten the "policy dilemma" faced by the Bank of England over further interest rate rises.

But Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday told the Treasury Select Committee that he viewed some of the rise in the pound as "irrational and erratic".



Mr. George insisted that the pound's current strength is as much connected to political developments surrounding EMU as with the expectation of further interest rate rises.

Mr. George said: "The economic cycle explains part of the reason for the strength but it is mostly associated with developments in Europe."

The Governor also admitted that the Bank is uncertain as to the likely impact of windfall payments. But Mr. George

rejected the charge of Quentin Davies, Tory MP for Grantham and Stamford, that the Government should have taken account of the payouts by raising taxation, insisting the Budget had gone "a long way in the right direction".

Economists said that with the quarterly average growth in high street sales now showing an annual rate of 5.3 per cent — the highest figure since December 1988 — there is a danger that sales growth could accelerate further.

Adam Cole, UK economist at James Capel, gave warning that there is much more to come in terms of windfall spending and sales growth is also strong in other sectors such as clothing and footwear.

Andrew Cates, UK economist at UBS, said: "With sterling's strength doing much to dampen both domestic cost pressures and export demand, further increases in base rates are not warranted and would risk a hard landing for the economy next year."

The separate British Chambers of Commerce study of more than 9,000 companies showed export prospects dropping rapidly, with a net balance of 10 per cent of manufacturers reporting that their forward orders for exports over the next three months are falling — the lowest figure since 1992. But manufacturers' domestic sales and orders are broadly stable.

Commentary, page 27
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Record month for home goods

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HOUSEHOLD goods retailers enjoyed a record month in June as consumers rushed to spend building society windfall payouts.

Official data pointed to an extra £150 million of expenditure in the sector last month, almost certainly due to windfall-related spending on large purchase items.

Overall sales of household goods increased 7.5 per cent from May and were 21 per cent up on last June — the largest rise since January 1988.

The biggest winners were carpet retailers, with sales up 30 per cent from last June, electrical goods, up 28 per cent, and furniture, up 24 per cent. DIY sales also increased 10 per cent on last year.

Total high street sales rose 0.6 per cent from May, while the quarterly rate of increase jumped to 5.3 per cent — the highest figure since December 1988.

But the windfall-related spending, which added an estimated 1 percentage point to the index, masked a poor performance in other sectors of the high street, as the wet June weather took its toll.

Food sales fell 1.6 per cent from May, while sales in the non-specialised stores and non-store retailing and repair categories also declined. Sales of clothing and footwear fared slightly better, increasing 1.5 per cent from May, taking the annual rate to 4.4 per cent.

Economists said that high street spending could be even stronger this month as the improved weather should allow food sales to rebound, while there is likely to be more windfall-related spending.

BUSINESS TODAY

| STOCK MARKET INDICES | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| FTSE 100 | 4824.5 (+27.8) |
| Yield | 3.4% |
| FTSE All share | 10236.7 (+11.78) |
| Nikkei | 20730.21 (+26.51) |
| Dow Jones | 8961.34 (+36.28) |
| S&P Composite | 239.10 (+5.12) |

| US RATE | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Federal Funds | 5 1/8% (5 1/8%) |
| Long Bond | 102.25% (102 1/2%) |
| Yield | 5.41% (5.41%) |

| LONDON MONEY | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 3-month interbank | 6 1/2% (6 1/2%) |
| Libor 3-month | 11 1/8% (11 1/8%) |
| Libor 6-month | 11 1/8% (11 1/8%) |

| STERLING | |
|----------|------------------|
| New York | 1.5773* (1.5803) |
| London | |
| \$ | 1.5812 (1.5787) |
| DM | 3.0720 (3.0394) |
| FF | 1.4830 (1.4830) |
| SP | 2.4989 (2.4820) |
| Yen | 194.82 (183.85) |
| £ index | 106.6 (106.7) |

| DOLLAR | |
|---------|------------------|
| London | |
| DM | 1.8240* (1.8235) |
| FF | 6.1480* (6.1225) |
| SP | 1.4830 (1.4830) |
| Yen | 115.71* (114.56) |
| £ index | 104.8 (104.0) |

| HEALTHY 500 | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Brent 15-day (Oct) | \$18.45 (\$18.30) |
| Gold | |

| LONDON CLOSING | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| London close | \$384.45 (\$388.35) |

* denotes midday trading price

Take off

Europe has decided not to block the merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas after winning substantial concessions from the American aerospace companies. Page 26

Disappointment

Reuters Holdings, the information group, disappointed the market with a 3 per cent fall in profits and a share buyback that returns less than a fifth of the group's cash mountain. Page 27, Tempus 28

Northern Rock float costs hit £9m

By CAROLINE MERRELL

NORTHERN ROCK incurred costs of £9 million as it prepared to convert from building society to bank and float on the stock market later this year.

Despite the Nationwide's determination to retain its status as a mutual, Northern Rock is convinced it will prosper as a bank when it obtains a listing in October.

David Baker, executive di-

rector, said he hoped the building society would retain its independence after conversion. "We hope that our performance for shareholders will ensure our continued independence," he said. Members will receive an average windfall of £1,400.

Yesterday Northern Rock reported a 27 per cent decline in half-year pre-tax profits to £62.6 million.

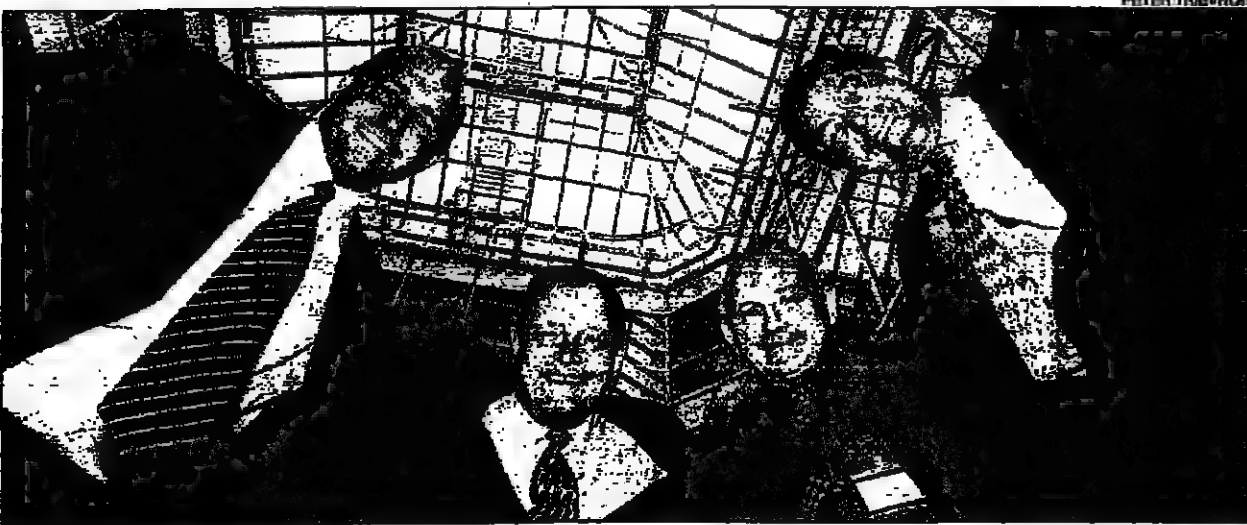
The society said it was trying to get its balance sheet in order before flotation.

Mr. Baker blamed the closure of its financial services division on the high costs of compliance. Staff from the division will be redeployed elsewhere in the society.

Pre-tax profits, excluding conversion costs and write-down of property, rose 10.2 per cent to £97 million, helped by

reduced costs. Net lending fell during the six months to £794 million, from £1.1 billion for the first half of 1996. Retail receipts rose to £531 million, from £302 million for the same period last year. The society said much of the new money came from the recently floated Halifax, Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich.

Nationwide vote, page 1



Adam Applegarth, executive director, Bob Bennett, group finance director, Leo Finn, chief executive, and David Baker

Analysts shocked at low price for exploration company

Ramco Energy takes over JKC for £54m

By CARL MORTIMER

JKC Oil & Gas, the exploration company chaired by Sir Robert Horton, is to be taken over by Ramco Energy, an AIM-listed rival, for £54 million, a fraction at which JKC shares were sold to the public two years ago.

Ramco Energy is making a paper offer worth 46p per share for JKC. Sir Robert, a former chairman of BP and currently chairman of Railtrack, brought the exploration group to the

market in July 1995 at 190p per share. However, despite owning a stake in big oil and gasfields in Ukraine, JKC never made much money in the former Soviet republic because local customers failed to pay for the gas it produced.

Oil analysts were shocked at the price at which JKC had agreed to sell. NatWest Securities estimates JKC is worth £1 per share. Iain Reid, NatWest analyst, said: "The management appear to have thrown in the towel, recommending such a low price."

Ramco said it had secured the backing of institutions accounting for 26 per cent of JKC shares.

These are likely to include Morgan Grenfell which, prior to a rights issue in February, owned 17 per cent of the company. Peter Young, the controversial Morgan Grenfell fund manager who left after the discovery of irregular dealings, is thought to have been a supporter of JKC. Capital Group, the US fund manager, held 12 per cent last year, while recent investors include

PDFM, which acquired 10 per cent in April, and Mercury Asset Management, 5 per cent.

Ramco, whose shares have soared on the back of its interest in the huge oilfields in the Caspian Sea, is thought to be looking for a partner to reduce the risk of operating in the political turmoil of Ukraine. Bob McCrack, a new managing director, was brought in this year to cut costs at JKC.

Tempus, page 28

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Carpetbaggers at bay



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

There are three good reasons for welcoming the defeat of Michael Hardern and his fellow pirates in their attempt to hijack the good ship Nationwide and convert it into a bank, to the enrichment of its three and a half million members. One is economic, one a matter of principle and the third is purely practical.

The last thing the British economy needs is anything up to £7 billion, dumped on the high street in time for next summer's sales, with the promise of plenty more to come as the dwindling band of surviving building societies are picked off by marauding bands of carpetbaggers. The retail sales figures make this perfectly clear: the growth in those consumer items whose prices nearly coincide with the average windfall.

On this analysis, the inevitable rises in interest rates in coming months might not have been enough to choke off this supply of fresh money. They would instead have made life difficult for mortgage-holders who were not recipients of demutualisation largesse, and for manufacturing as the pound headed inexorably for two dollars. And still, as the next batch of building society members received their payoffs, the spending spree would continue.

On a matter of principle, there may be no proof that the continuing existence of building societies modifies the rates charged by the converted and by existing

banks. But it would seem foolhardy to allow societies to join the great auk and the dodo while the theory is unproven. In ten years' time we might need them again. Even more foolhardy to have seen mass extinction driven by the worst sort of short-termism, the desire of the greedy for a few bob more.

On a practical note, while the antics of Michael Hardern may have enlivened the campaign, they have given no one who has met him confidence that he was ideal for the board of Nationwide or for any other business. His style of dress, his choice of venues for public appearances, his abrupt changes of opinion, these are between him and his psychiatrist. But his decision to base his campaign on sheer greed — "If you want £1,000, vote for me" — hardly suggests a coherent business plan.

The same may not be true of his four fellow rebels, but the voting figures do not suggest that the opposition to him was personal. He polled a few thousand votes less than they managed, true, but the poll in favour of the incumbents, and for mutual status, was overwhelming, and almost three times higher.

Nationwide is entitled to hope

that this puts a lid on the matter. Alas, not so, because anyone is entitled, at this or any other society, to repeat the process. Those who call on legal action to curb carpetbagging simply miss the point. The mutual movement has won this battle by defending its inherent qualities from change. It would be perverse if the victory was followed by fundamental change brought about by Parliament rather than by carpetbagging.

The Bank that needs to say no

As part of the consumer boom currently gripping the country, the Bank of England's monetary policy committee should all might buy themselves a new pair of spectacles each. These glasses will allow the venerable economists and central bankers to view the storming retail sales figures in

the same way that they see the storming pound. Either they take both these economic facts of life into the reckoning when deciding whether to put up interest rates, or ignore both.

Eddie George told the Treasury Select Committee yesterday that the 25 per cent rise in sterling in a year was irrational. And because the Bank believes rise is irrational and somehow relates to EMU, it does not see how increasing interest rates will effect it. So it is largely ignoring the pound when deciding on interest rates. Meanwhile the few bits of British industry which still make and export things are having a dreadful time trying to compete at DM3.06 to the pound.

At the same time the Bank is all in a tizzy about consumer spending — believing the economy is in danger of overheating like a badly wired toaster. But if you take a close look at the consumer boom the UK is enjoying is being driven by building

society windfalls. The Bank may say windfalls are the froth and the underlying growth is too strong. But this boom has an air of being short lived.

What are people buying? Carpets, furniture and electrical goods. They are investing in their homes. You only buy new home furnishings every few years (unless you own cats). These sectors suffered during the early 1990s and it looks like many people may be making the expensive household purchases they put off a few years ago because they were afraid of losing their jobs. Also this bout of avid consumer spending is quite likely to choke off an element of future expenditure on household products in the next two or three years.

The Nationwide vote indicates the building society conversion boom could be over, and with it this short-term consumer boom. This time next year — without an intervention from the Bank — there is a fair bet that we will be

seeing a fall in retail sales. So this apparent boom looks like a temporary blip. Meanwhile the strong pound looks like a real problem. If the Bank wants to ignore something, it should ignore consumer sales, because the pound will rise if interest rates are put up again. And that rise will not be irrational and will not be welcome.

The Wright decision

The new director of the Serious Fraud Office, Rosalind Wright, has quickly learnt the art of the possible. By deciding not to get involved in the investigation of the £77 million options mispricing scandal at NatWest Markets, she has avoided the SFO spending many months, and possibly many millions of pounds, pursuing a case that it would be difficult to bring to court and virtually impossible to explain to a jury.

Indeed if there had been any crime, it would have been in the concealment of the losses, not actually making the losses in the first place. This would be akin to pursuing a bank robber for

speeding in the getaway car. So Mrs Wright, who came from the Securities and Futures Authority, has said it is an SFA matter.

This should please Kyriacos Papouis and co, because going by past performance, the SFA does not consider concealing losses to be that big an issue. Take the case of Bruce Baer, a bond dealer at Banque Paribas. Three years ago he lost £6.25 million in two days, hiding the losses from his bosses. The SFA investigated, fined him £5,000 and said he could retain his SFA registration.

Of course the NatWest Markets case is fundamentally different. It is a lot more money, involves a high street bank and has brought about the resignations of some senior City figures. But if Mr Papouis's lawyers are worth their money, they will be studying the Bruce Baer case very closely indeed.

If not now, when?

WHY DO the "shareholders of Formula One Holdings" (meaning Bernie Ecclestone) feel the need to put out a statement saying Salomon Brothers is their "exclusive financial advisor" advising on "a number of strategic alternatives" with "an initial public offering" the "preferred course of action"? Surely there can never have been any doubt about this. The interesting line is "no decision has even been made with respect to timing."

Reuters disappoints City with mere £200m buyback

By JASON NISSE

LVMH tops up GrandMet holdings

Bernard Arnault, the head of LVMH who on Tuesday pushed his stake in Grand Metropolitan past 10 per cent, kept up the pressure against the proposed merger of GrandMet with Guinness yesterday by increasing his holding in GrandMet.

Market sources said M. Arnault had continued his tactic of switching out of Guinness and into GrandMet, though the amounts are thought to have been negligible compared with Tuesday's frenetic trading. It was confirmed yesterday that LVMH reduced its stake in Guinness from 14.2 per cent to 12.46 per cent, while raising its holding in GrandMet from 6.37 per cent to 11.05 per cent.

Volumes in the two companies yesterday were around double normal levels, with Guinness shedding 64p to 591p and GrandMet 5p to 61p. M. Arnault, who has resigned as a non-executive director of Guinness, is due in London today to meet analysts and institutions to discuss his proposal that Guinness and GrandMet should merge their drinks arms with LVMH's Moët Hennessy and spin off food and brewing interests.

Further meetings are planned next week, but a spokesman for the Frenchman said they should not be interpreted as an institutional roadshow.

Budget blamed

British Steel yesterday took a further swipe at the Government's economic policies, blaming weak fiscal measures in the Budget for the strength of sterling.

The company, which is accelerating a restructuring programme involving thousands of redundancies because of the impact of the strong pound, urged the Chancellor ahead of the Budget to increase taxation.

At British Steel's annual meeting, Sir Brian Moffat, chairman and chief executive, said: "We support the Government's battle to keep inflation at low levels but believe it is unrealistic to put virtually all the pressure for these actions on interest rates, when governments and other European member states are using fiscal policy rather than interest rates as their response to the threat of inflation."

ICI director

ICI, the chemicals group, has appointed Sir Alex Trotman, the chairman and chief executive of Ford Motor Company, as a non-executive director.

REUTERS HOLDINGS, the information group, disappointed the market yesterday with a 3 per cent fall in profits and a share buyback that returns less than a fifth of the group's £1 billion plus cash mountain to shareholders.

Reuters shares fell 11p to 598.5p as Bob Rowley, finance director, put the blame on the Government. He said that the high pound had hit the currency translation of overseas earnings and that the present tax regime did not encourage large handouts.

The cash issue has been gnawing at Reuters for some time. It had to drop a £613 million dividend last year after Kenneth Clarke, the previous Chancellor, changed the tax regime.

Mr Rowley said the tax changes in Gordon Brown's first Budget, which removed dividend tax credit for pension funds, were the "first move to creating a level playing field".

The proposed £200 million buyback would stop the cash pile from growing further this year. But Peter Job, chief executive, said that the group could not go further unless the tax regime changed.

He added: "We're making this as big as we can within the tax capacity we have. The



Peter Job, chief executive, said the group could not go further with the buyback unless the tax regime changed

effect of this will be to stop the accumulation of cash in the enterprise but not to come to grips with the excess cash we're holding which we would rather shareholders had."

Although Mr Job would not rule out using the money to buy other information companies, he said: "We don't

want to be pushed into lax management through the availability of cash mountains or into inappropriate acquisitions."

The group's pre-tax profits fell to £333 million for the six months to June 30. Reuters blamed the strong pound, saying that in local currency

terms profits would have risen 11 per cent.

Earnings fell 3 per cent to 14.2p a share and there is an interim dividend of 3.1p payable on September 8, an increase of 8 per cent.

Reuters said that it was well on the way to quantifying the cost of the millennium prob-

lem — where many computers cannot handle the year change from 1999 to 2000. It is currently visiting many of its clients to see whether it will need to make software adjustments and how much this will cost.

Tempus, page 28

'Cleaned-up' Ohmeda could sell for £1bn

By PAUL DURMAN

CITY analysts believe BOC Group's sale of Ohmeda, its healthcare business, could raise close to £1 billion.

Estimates for the value of Ohmeda, whose business is based around anaesthetic gases, range from about £700 million. Although Ohmeda has suffered a sharp fall in profits in recent years after Forane lost its protection against generic competition, some believe bidders may be prepared to pay about two times sales, which were £506 million last year.

One commentator said: "Any buyer will be able to convince themselves that there's some profits growth to come out. It's still making a 16 per cent return on capital."

Danny Rosenkranz, BOC's chief executive, has asked JP Morgan, the investment bank, to find a buyer for Ohmeda



Rosenkranz crossroads

despite repeatedly insisting last year that he did not intend to sell the business. Ohmeda has about 4,800 employees in 30 countries.

Mr Rosenkranz said Ohmeda was at a crossroads, and BOC had to decide "either to invest in it or get out". He added: "It's been cleaned up,

the restructuring benefits are coming through. It's a business which could be made into quite a success... subject to putting serious money into it."

BOC's industrial gas businesses soaked up £621 million last year. Ohmeda's decline in profits, from £99 million in 1992 to £53 million last year, has prompted numerous calls for its sale.

However, Mr Rosenkranz said BOC was not simply responding to such pressure. "This is our decision."

Tempus, page 28

Sunderland scores a £3.1m profit

SUNDERLAND fans suffered the disappointment of relegation to the First Division for next season, but the club's first results since coming to the stock market show it has returned to profit.

The pre-tax figure of £3.1 million for the year to May 31 is slightly ahead of the estimates laid in its float prospectus and is an improvement on the pre-tax £2.7 million loss for 1996. The shares closed unchanged at 35p yesterday. They were placed at 55p each in December 1996.

The club is gearing up for the move to a £15 million, 42,000-seat purpose-built stadium at Monkwearmouth next Wednesday, in time for a pre-season friendly against Ajax, after leaving Roker Park.

Adjusted earnings were 57.2p a share, against losses of 19.8p previously. A dividend of 3.2p is to be paid on November 4.

Matthew Clark plays down impact of alcopops

Rosy result with less cider

By FRASER NELSON

MATTHEW CLARK, the drinks company, yesterday sought to shed its image as a victim of alcopops by showing that its Diamond White and Blackthorn ciders generate less than half its overall profits.

The company's shares rose 4p to 246½ as it detailed its profits breakdown for the first time, to prove that it is far less exposed to the shrinking cider market than many analysts feared. Peter Aikens, chief executive, said: "We took this decision because the view of the world is that we are just a cider business. We are a

branded drinks business with a strong wholesale arm, which is doing very well."

One analyst said: "We expected cider profits to fall quite sharply, but it appears Matthew Clark is slightly better balanced than we had given it credit for."

Overall pre-tax profits declined 4 per cent to £40.6 million in the year to April 30, after cider sales came in £12 million lower than expected, leaving group sales at £571 million (£451 million).

Mr Aikens admitted the company had underestimated the fragility of the Diamond White brand when it cut back on advertising. Cider sales fell 13 per cent in

the year to April 30, when the total market shrank 3 per cent. Its share of the market fell from 41 per cent to 37 per cent, and is expected to drop another point this year.

Profits from the wholesale business rose to £7 million, from £2.7 million, through first-time contributions from new stores. Mr Aikens ruled out any further acquisitions this year.

Earnings fell to 18.4p (31.9p) a share. The total dividend is held at 24p a share, with a final 15p due on October 17. No dividend increase is expected this year.

Tempus, page 28

Executive rejig at Burton ahead of demerger

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

THE Burton Group has taken another step down the path to demerger by making a raft of senior appointments at Debenhams and the rump fashion chains business.

Staff were told yesterday that Richard Maney, at present in charge of home shopping, will become executive director in charge of brands and home shopping at the fashion chains business.

This job had been offered to Stuart Rose, a Burton director, but he left when the demerger was announced. Mr Rose is now a contender to fill the vacancy of chief executive at WH Smith.

Keith Cameron, who has had control of logistics, property services and retail design and development, will become executive director of stores, personnel and operations at the fashion chain business.

This side of the business — which will be run by John Hoerner, current group chief executive — includes Dorothy Perkins, Burton Menswear, Principles, Top Shop and Evans and is as yet unnamed.

The company is running a competition to find a name

for the new holding company. Both Mr Maney and Mr Cameron will report directly to Mr Hoerner. Debenhams will be run by Terry Green, the current chief executive. Peter Kaurtsland will be managing director and Matthew Roberts finance director. Martin Clifford-King will be chief financial controller, the company said yesterday.

Nigel Hall, who runs the group information systems at present, has been appointed demerger director. He will leave the group after the process is completed.

The appointments mean that all the executive director roles at the two companies are now filled. One or two non-executives will need to be appointed to complete each board before the demerger.

Burton is planning to sell its group headquarters on Great Castle Street in the West End of London.

The cost of redundancies — the number of which has yet to be determined — as well as the savings expected from the demerger will be known to the company in September, but may not be announced until the demerger prospectus goes to shareholders in mid-December.

DEARING THE FULL RETORT.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Bulls run again on Fed Chairman's comments

CITY investors were riding high on the back of upbeat comments by Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Chairman, to Congress about the US economy.

Supported by the positive response overnight to his views by Wall Street, prices raced ahead in London, but were unable to maintain the early pace. Retail sales during June were higher than expected, largely because of building society windfalls.

At one stage the FTSE 100 index was almost 35 points higher before the profit-makers moved in as Wall Street gave up early gains. The FTSE 100 closed 27.8 up at 4,874.5, with the FTSE 250 20.0 higher at 4,481.8. A total of \$46 million shares changed hands.

Grand Metropolitan retreated 5p to 617p despite the fact that LVMH was again adding to its holdings. It has been confirmed that Bernard Arnault's luxury goods group has raised its stake to 23.7 million shares, or 11.05 per cent. To help to finance the stakebuilding, it has reduced its 14 per cent stake in Guinness, down 6p to 591p to 236 million shares, or 12.46 per cent.

M. Arnault wants to merge the drinks interests of all three companies and has opposed the £24 billion merger between GrandMet and Guinness.

The "for sale" sign has gone up on BOC Group's healthcare operation. The asking price is reckoned to be £1 billion, which has pleased a market expecting the proceeds to reduce greatly the group's £1.7 billion debt mountain. The shares rose 6p to £11.41½ on turnover of 3.5 million shares.

As expected, the strong pound took its toll of first-half figures from Reuters, down 15p at 568½p, and the group admitted that revenues and earnings would be affected in the second half. Peter Job, chief executive, has confirmed plans to buy back £200 million worth of shares.

The strong pound is continuing to bite deep into profit margins at British Steel, down 1p at 155½p. But shareholders at the annual meeting were told by Sir Brian Moffat, chairman, that he was optimistic about prospects.

Worried also by the effect of a strong pound, Allied Colloids slipped 3½p to 111p, but



British Steel shares dipped 1p, but the chairman is upbeat

ICI firmed 3½p to 925p as NatWest Securities, the broker, urged clients to continue adding to their holdings.

There are still sellers of Shell Diagnostics at the higher levels as the company attempts to repair the damage done to its share price earlier this year by some corrupted laboratory tests. Yesterday the price raced up to 607½p on the back of its latest deal with

Abbott Laboratories. The price closed 17½p off at 550p as 300,000 shares were traded in a thin market.

Biocompatibles was another volatile market, with the price touching £10.35 after being moved to comment about recent weakness in the shares. The group says that talks with Johnson & Johnson, aimed at agreeing a licensing deal for its phosphorylcholine

coating for surgical stents, were continuing. The shares closed a further 8½p cheaper at 997½p.

British Building & Engineering stood out with a leap of 15½p at 70½p as speculation mounted that it will soon announce an agreed cash offer from Britannia. Britannia was unchanged at 30p.

Confirmation of agreed bid terms lifted Collectas Group 16p to 93½p. Moore Corporation, a Canadian company, is offering 95p a share, valuing the direct marketing group at £21.6 million.

Bid terms from Ramco Energy lifted JKC Oil & Gas 3½p to 47½p. The all-share offer values JKC at around 46.3p a share, or £54 million. Ramco formed 30p to £11.57½.

The near 4 per cent rise in half-year profits from Spargo Consultants did little to impress brokers, but the 13 per cent increase in the dividend was seen as a positive move. The price rose 2½p to 114½p, with brokers forecasting £1.45 million for the full year.

There were new winners to AIM. Kingsfisher Leisure made an encouraging start. Placed at 100p, the shares opened at 173½p before dipping to 172½p. They closed at 173½p, a premium of 13½p.

Citadel Holdings was placed at 100p and opened at 105½p. After touching a peak for the day of 109½p, the price eventually closed at 106½p, a premium of 6½p.

GILT-EDGED: London responded to the overnight enthusiasm shown by US Treasury bonds to the Fed Chairman's view of the US economy and the strong pound. Prices at the long end surged by around 1p and investors clamoured for stock in the latest Bank of England auction.

In the futures pit, brokers reported brisk business as the September series of the long gilt jumped 6½p to £151½. A total of 123,000 contracts were completed.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was £1½ higher at £112½, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 finished five ticks better at £107½.

NEW YORK: The stock market soared again in early trading, extending the previous session's run into the record books. Profit-taking curbed the rally and at midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 36.69 ahead at 8,098.34.

The tide of windfall cash from building societies converging into banks found its way into retailers' tills last month. The cash accounted for the 0.6 per cent rise in retail sales to 5.4 per cent year-on-year.

Lord Forest of Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, was not surprised by the outcome. "The effects of the windfall on sales has been entirely consistent with the upbeat trading statement issued recently from Dixons. Big ticket items, such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods and do-it-yourself, all benefited," he said.

Furniture sales were 24 per cent up, electrical goods 28 per cent higher and carpets 30 per cent stronger. As to be expected, it was Dixons that led the retailers higher with a jump of 1p to 556p. Mr Forest continues to view Dixons as one of the better buys in the sector.

He said that the rest was as expected. The wet weather during June affected sales of clothing and footwear. Those to be hit by this are retailers such as Marks & Spencer, up 2½p at 588½p, and Burton, 1½p firmer at 131½p.

Shoppers' windfalls have the tills ringing loudly

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

FTSE 350 retailers general price index

Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul

Source: DataStream

COMMODITIES

ICE-UK (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS (Brent FOB)

PRODUCTS (N/A)

ICE-UK (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS (Brent FOB)

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PRODUCTS (N/A)

ICE-UK (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS (Brent FOB)

PRODUCTS (N/A)

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones 8098.34 (+36.69)

S&P Composite 939.10 (+5.12)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average 20,205.1 (-26.31)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng 15,738.81 (+209.05)

Amsterdam:

EOE Index 988.48 (+27.86)

Sydney:

ASX 2693.4 (+27.4)

Frankfurt:

DAX 4406.09 (+175.67)

Singapore:

Straits 1974.09 (+24.18)

Brussels:

General 1497.08 (+26.17)

Paris:

CAC-40 3003.53 (+82.40)

Zurich:

SIX Gen 1204.80 (+29.00)

London:

FTSE 100 4874.5 (+27.8)

FTSE 250 4481.8 (+20.0)

FTSE 350 20.0 (+1.2)

FTSE 1000 274.62 (+4.4)

FTSE All-Share 2297.07 (+10.7)

FTSE Non-Financials 2297.07 (+10.7)

FTSE Financials 126.36 (+0.37)

FTSE Govt 50s 47.72 (+0.52)

Bargains 4996

SEAQ Volume 867,888

US\$ 1.8810 (+0.0004)

German Mark 1.5712 (+0.0002)

Exchange Index 1006 (+0.9)

Bank of England official rate (4pm)

ECUR 1.5379

ESUR 1.291

RPI 157.5 Jun (2.7%) Jan 1997-100

RPIX 156.7 Jun (2.7%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

Ashtree 135p

Cannock 124p

Citadel Holdings 106½p

Delcam 267p

EMF B 115

European Mng 25

Galen Holdings 195 + 1½

Gronmont Hldgs 24

Gronmont Hldgs Wts 110

Heliom Publics 149p

Himachi Credit (UK) 110p

Kingsfisher Leisure 173½p

Primsight 125p

Pyrat & Arnold 57

Rebourne Merin 108p

Royalist Group 207p

SBS Group 108p

Thorn B 21

Woolwich 287

RIGHTS ISSUES

Brit Borneo n/p 51½ - 11

HTT Enter n/p (270) 55

Jays Fund Inc n/p (1/1) 1

Lon Bldg Strv n/p (30) 30½

Mackie Int n/p (20) 1

Tee Plant n/p (120) 5

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS

Gold Fields Prop 177½ (+18p)

Gold Fields Prop 180½ (+18p)

Country Gold 179½ (+11p)

Brenwin Dolphin 200p (+11p)

Crodia 280p (+11p)

Cookson 214½ (+8p)

Black Sea 485p (+15p)

Black Sea 485p (+15p)

Black Sea 485p (+15p)

Black Sea 485p (+15p)

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US

Too much cash

ON THE day that Scottish Widows decided that cash is king, Reuters was mourning that it could not get rid of its hoard. The saga of the group's £1 billion money mountain has engulfed what used to be considered an exciting, go-ahead, multimedia organisation. Today, Reuters has more of the look of a boring utility with a management in search of a mission.

Reuters should be a great deal more dynamic than it is. It has an unparalleled database of historical data, a formidable network of information gatherers providing up-to-the-minute news and financial information and a client base that would be the envy of most technology companies. It also throws off a lot of cash - £409 million in the first half of this year - which it could be investing in all sorts of clever things to sell to its clients, or

novel distribution systems that would make its database accessible to the world and its personal computer.

Instead, Reuters has merely floundered around trying to give the money back to its shareholders, with little success, blaming the Government for its predicament. It is time for Peter Job to wake up. The Reuters growth machine is now suffering a fall in profits. Blaming the pound will do little to restore Reuters shares to their premium.

In the next few months Reuters will reveal the full extent of its millennium problems, which could well be another blow to the reputation of this media monolith. Meanwhile, monetary union will not help Reuters' foreign exchange information services one iota. This company needs to run ever faster to stand still, but it appears to be slowing. So will the shares.

Ramco/JKX Oil

IF ANYONE can make money from gas in Ukraine, it is probably Steve Ramco, chief executive of Ramco, the oil services group turned exploration company that has bid £54 million for JKX Oil & Gas. Ramco is getting JKX for a song - just 46p per share compared with estimates of its asset value of about £1 per share.

JKX is cheap not because of its prospects but because of its record. The company has attractive assets, in particular a 49 per cent interest in the Poltava field, which contains 80 million barrels of oil and gas. JKX is producing in one of the world's largest gas markets, but getting paid is another matter. Last year's £24 million loss included a provision of £1.6 million after a contract collapsed.

JKX is a salutary lesson

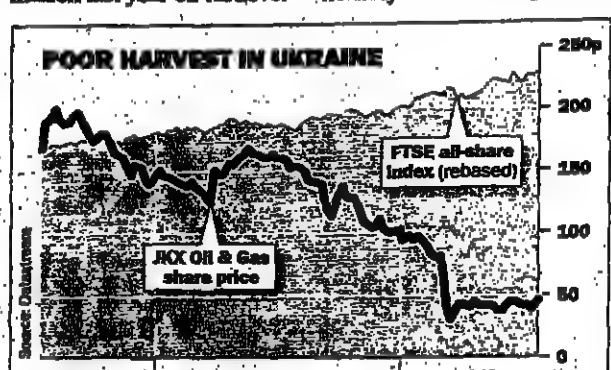
BOC

AFTER endless badgering about its underperforming healthcare business, BOC has finally given in to the sceptics and put Onmeda up for sale. So much for last year's assurances to the contrary. Onmeda's profits have fallen from £99 million to £53 million over the past five years, but the sales group had been claiming that the healthcare company was set for a revival.

That is still the story but the turnaround has been delayed. Onmeda was not a success, which hurt plans to launch a generic treatment. BOC claims it faced a choice of making a heavy investment commitment to Onmeda, or finding a new owner. Given the existing demands on capital from the core gases businesses, there could only be one answer.

JP Morgan can still dress Onmeda up quite nicely. The long fall in the price of

just £15 million. Ramco's biggest success in Azerbaijan has been in the role of fixer, putting together a deal, retaining a minority interest and bringing in top oil companies with expertise and capital to do the job. Ramco will need to find a partner in Ukraine, and it could prove less investor-friendly than Azerbaijan.



Technology indicates that television is not being revolutionised either.

Pace came to the market last year-billed as the company that had everything. On the eve of the digital broadcasting age, it had contracts to supply a third of the decoders for the BSkyB-backed British Interactive Broadcasting - a key position in a potentially huge market.

Twelve months on, and we are still waiting. The City is getting impatient and the shares have lost 90 per cent of their value. Pace will just have to wait, but for how long? BSkyB has put its digital programming back until next spring. The cloud of uncertainty, however, over the company makes its crippled shares still seem too much of a gamble. In the mean time, consumers are waiting for the digital age before buying a new analogue decoder, creating a nasty hole in its market.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED

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Dividend grab is economic nonsense

You were warned. Millions of us decided at election time that we did not want a Conservative government to continue. The downside was that, in the absence of a rival ideology, we would elect the most politically correct administration in history.

Nowhere has this fear of point-less political correctness been more effectively fulfilled than in Gordon Brown's first Budget. The Chancellor excused his £5 billion-a-year grab on dividends paid to pension funds and charities on the grounds that "the present system produces companies to pay out dividends rather than reinvest their profits". In the modern manner, Mr Brown's devastating deterrent to savings was disguised as an incentive to economic growth.

The agenda is an old Labour one. It dates back to the revolution in company tax made in Lord Callaghan's comparable first Labour Budget of 1965, which proved as misguided in its effects as any until Mr Brown's effort on July 2. The philosophy is simple: dividends bad, investment good. This has

only tangential connections to the corporation tax system.

The Tory imputation system of the early 1970s was devised to make it tax-neutral for companies to retain profits or to pay them out in dividends. This redressed the supposed 1965 bias against dividends, which had actually resulted in a relative cut in retentions. But it did not allow for the growth of pension funds and their even greater rise in influence as shareholders. By slashing the value of dividends to these tax-free gross funds, Mr Brown aims to redress the theoretical balance once again.

Essentially, Mr Brown aims to reinstate the reforms proposed by the late old Labour Lord Kaldor a generation ago. Lord Kaldor was a great economist whose profound insights have enduring value. But he was not, as it turned out, a great tax adviser. The punier figures who advise Mr Brown 30 years on

have little grounding in reality to commend them and no compensating claim to intellectual respect.

There are certainly instances where, through changing circumstance, companies paid too much in dividends to invest enough in retained earnings to keep their existing businesses in good fettle. The former Hanson group and BTR come to mind. Both depended on repeating one-off takeover gains that could not go on for ever. In both cases, market forces dealt with the imbalance as the expense of shareholders who were not fully apprised of the problem, markets being far from perfect.

These are, however, exceptions. Little evidence has been put forward to suggest that big companies — the sort beholden to the dividend demands of big fund managers — are deterred from investing because dividends absorb too much of profits, any more

fashionable rationalisation is doubtless going on here, but there is at least no lack of equity support.

Investors want high-growth companies with opportunities to expand to go for it. Their reward lies in capital growth and, ultimately, in dividends rising strongly from a low base. There is no demand to return cash.

Attitudes are different when you come to companies in mature industries that have limited opportunities to grow their existing businesses much faster than the economy. They present a different choice. Should the board invest surplus cash in new ventures or pay it to shareholders and let them choose new investments?

There does seem to be a genuine difference here between Anglo-Saxon and continental/Japanese practice. But we should not be too defensive about UK methods. On the whole, big corporations have a

poor record of diversifying into new exciting technologies. Better, perhaps, to take the cash out and use our sophisticated venture capital industry to back the new.

Dividend policy is a silly subplot to arguments about the level of corporate investment. By far the greatest deterrent is the level of money interest rates. Second to that is high real interest rates. Even in an inflationary economy, high money interest rates multiply the risk of grassroots investment, especially investing in expansion. No wonder a risk-averse culture has grown up that prefers takeovers of competitors or other well-established businesses as the easy way to expand and a safer use of investors' money and limited managerial skills.

The fall in money interest rates in recent years offers the greatest hope for a secular rise in the demand for savings to invest. If the



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

than they were when the Wilson committee investigated a generation ago. Rather the reverse. Many finance directors of successful but mature companies view equity capital (including retained earnings) as a needlessly expensive form of finance. They have paid out special dividends or promoted share buybacks in order to switch to debt finance. Much mindlessly

American grand tobacco settlement ducks the difficult but vital issues

America's grand tobacco settlement, the ceasefire pact between cigarette makers and the anti-smoking lobby after decades of courtroom warfare, shows signs of unravelling. For good reason: even fervent anti-tobacco campaigners should have misgivings about the precedents it sets.

The implications extend beyond the US. Other governments may be tempted to clone the deal, and its mistakes, although the \$1.9 billion bid on Tuesday by BAT Industries for Mexico's largest cigarette maker shows that less-regulated countries will offer tobacco companies refuge for years.

Beyond tobacco, the message is even more significant: like the windfall tax, it represents an opportunistic raid on the deep-pockets of an unpopular industry, by politicians inclined to duck the responsibilities of government.

without medical insurance. Companies will also accept a ban on billboards, vending machines, sports promotions, and advertising characters such as the Marlboro Man. Cigarette packets will have to carry labels saying "smoking can kill you" and manufacturers will have to disclose for the first time the levels of tar, nicotine and additives, believed to make US cigarettes among the world's most hazardous.

In return, companies would be immune to state lawsuits and class actions in the US. Individuals and foreign groups could still sue, but tobacco industry experts are sanguine about this threat, largely because lawyers will be less interested in pressing these less lucrative cases.

The deal is hugely popular, in a country now turning its puritanical streak against its 45 million smokers. Tobacco companies have become popular villains for the way they have contested suggestions that their products might be addictive or life-threatening, while battling to hide details of their ingredients. They have deployed every check and balance of the American political system to keep themselves as lightly regulated as much of the food industry.

It is certainly true that regulation is tightened. But there are worrying points about the way it is happening. For a start, the pact bears too clearly the imprint of its origins as a commercial deal, not least in that lawyers' fees may amount to more than \$4 billion, far greater than in any comparable deal. Conventionally generated legislation is at least nominally designed to serve the public interest, whatever compromises are later struck. But in reaching their bargain, state governments were mainly concerned to raise money, and tobacco companies to cap their liability. The consequences run throughout the pact's 68 pages.



Cigarette makers are to give much clearer warnings and will not advertise on billboards

In terms of protecting public health and deterring smoking, the most important part of the deal is the curbing of the industry's future behaviour. But once the prospect of the settlement bonanza appeared real, the states' lawyers accepted amendments to the fine print that make the curbs near-useless. On paper, the pact gives the Food and Drug Administration the power to regulate nicotine and ratchet down levels in cigarettes.

But first, the FDA must show that this would not create "significant demand for contraband", such as a black market in stronger cigarettes from Mexico, a formidable legal task.

Similarly, the popular clause that requires cigarette makers to drive down youth smoking by 30 per cent in five years, and by 60 per cent in 10 years, is weaker than it seems. Although companies face \$2 billion in annual penalties if they miss these targets, three-quarters of

the fine can be waived if they have pursued all "reasonably available measures".

The courtroom origins of the deal show most clearly in its least justifiable element: the retrospective punishment of companies who were acting within the law at the time. Michael Moore, Attorney-General of Mississippi, made this explicit in June, declaring: "We wanted to do something that would punish this industry for its past misconduct."

This principle has enraged

conservatives; many others also feel misgivings. Without denying the addictive qualities of cigarettes, many feel that smokers bear some responsibility for their habit after years of warnings about the dangers. The deal also rests on the dubious calculation by state governments of the costs of paying for smokers' healthcare: as many have bluntly pointed out, by dying earlier, smokers may have saved them money.

In defending the punitive element of the deal, some might argue that businesses were acting unethically, albeit legally. There is much to be said for current fashion, particularly in Britain, for reminding businesses that they have ethical responsibilities. But notions of what is acceptable behaviour have changed: even after the dangers became known, smoking continued to be considered acceptable. Many find it unfair that companies should be saddled with costs of this scale, years after the event, let alone with responsibilities that properly belong with government.

The feature of the deal that is most troubling is the attempt to justify it by appropriating part of the settlement for the unrelated matter of poor children's healthcare costs. Mr Clinton played the children card heavily this week in indicating that the deal, in principle, had his support.

But this purely political move is no more than the transfer of a large slice of wealth from an unpopular rich group to popular poor group. In this, it resembles Gordon Brown's windfall tax on utilities, earmarked to pay for schemes to get the young unemployed back to work. The US tobacco settlement and Mr Brown's tax are both attempts to shore creaking benefit systems with one-off raids on the corporate sector, while ducking the politically difficult task of persuading the electorate to pay more or expect less.

Others countries' politicians may not abdicate as much of their job, passing it on to the courts, as do their American counterparts. But as this deal shows, attacking big business offers an internationally tempting escape route from the responsibilities of government.

Ceasefire brings fresh hopes for boom in tourism

Eileen McCabe compares experiences in Northern Ireland and the Republic

A businessman in Co Fermanagh who has just rebuilt his bombed hotel laughed nervously when asked what he thought of tourism prospects in the wake of the recently declared IRA ceasefire. "We are not making any comment. We just want to sit quietly and say nothing. Look what happened to us 12 months ago," he said.

His hotel, on the shore of Lough Erne in one of Northern Ireland's top tourist areas, was badly damaged when an explosion ripped through its foyer. Now back in business, he is anxious about the future.

Although his hotel was the only tourist venue to be bombed between ceasefires, the whole sector was badly shaken by the resumption of IRA violence and the civil unrest in Drumree.

As expected, tourism was the first sector to benefit from the environment of peace after the first ceasefire was declared in August 1994. In 1995, the number of holidaymakers to Northern Ireland jumped almost 70 per cent to 460,000. Such was the level of interest that some operators complained about a scarcity of accommodation. But just as hoteliers and tour operators started savouring the pleasure of working in a peaceful environment, events on the streets began to go sour.

In July 1995, the international media returned to the North to focus their lenses on the riots that followed an Orange Order parade through a Nationalist area in Drumree. Barely six months later the IRA ended its ceasefire with a huge bomb in London's Canary Wharf.

Despite these blows, tourist inquiries continued at an encouraging rate. But even the most hardy tourist was, says the Northern Ireland Tourist Office, put off by last summer. Daily images on their TV screens of riots, road blockades and civil strife in Northern Ireland finally put an end to the tourist boom. In 1996 the number of holidaymakers fell 30 per cent to 333,000 and this

year numbers are believed to have slipped again — almost back to pre-1994 ceasefire levels. The experience of tour operators such as Dublin's Abbey Travel is typical. They worked hard to encourage interest in Northern Ireland after the first ceasefire, but last summer found themselves having to move quickly to redirect some of their customers away from Belfast when violence spilled on to its streets.

Since Drumree in 1996, consumer confidence began to fade. The contrast of fortune between the tourism sectors on either side of the border could not be more stark.

In the Republic the number of tourists has grown 10 per cent each year over the past decade. Since 1988 bed numbers have almost doubled as investment flowed into hotel construction. According to the Republic's tourist board, the number of total overseas tourists — which includes holidaymakers, business travellers and visitors to relatives — reached 4.7 million last year and generated revenue of £1.45 billion (£1.28 billion).

The Northern Ireland tourist board says it had 1.4 million overseas tourists in the same year, but they spent only £205 million. Even allowing for the fact that the North is about a fifth the size of the Republic and has a population of 1.5 million, compared with more than 3.5 million, the gap is large.

But, given that the product on either side of the border is similar and that the two tourist authorities recently agreed to market the island of Ireland as a single tourist destination, it is clear the gap could quickly be closed.

Although it is too early to predict when that might happen, even the most hard-bitten hotelier in Northern Ireland can take some comfort from the fact that the present ceasefire has come just as tour operators are putting the final touches to their 1998 brochures, allowing Northern Ireland to be included in their packages.

Chaos theory

"LAURA MAXWELL: Building a New Life in Los Angeles." From the latest *Hello!* magazine — look, I came across it at the dentist. OK? The estranged wife of Ian Maxwell describes her life in Captain Bob's family in terms so sycophantic that one feels some regret that Hitler's secretary died the other week and so was deprived of the full *Hello!* treatment. Rude and a bully, but, says Laura — now taken up with an animal rights activist — "you had to hand it to a man who was able to create this much chaos".

Those accountants and lawyers investigating the Maxwell empire wanted to make

money, or their names, and they used the pensioners as their excuse — "I don't think many really cared." By contrast, "a particular torment during the tense months preceding the brothers' dawn arrests in June 1992 was being silenced by sub judice laws forbidding them even from expressing empathy for those pensioners whose funds were missing." Beyond parody.

● ANXIOUS days at the swish headquarters of casino operator Capital Corporation, waiting to see whether Margaret Beckett will allow London Clubs to bid again. The smart money says she will. Last time the defence team was led by Nigel Panton; now out of Hambros after his part in the Lanica Trust affair. Penny Scott, manager under Panton, is on a year's sabbatical. By a complete coincidence, Richard Redmayne, Lanica's broker at HSBC James Capel, is a non-executive director of — Capital. Small world.

Unbelievable
I HAVE absolutely no idea who is pulling whose leg here. John Williams, managing director of Knight Williams, is backing the



appointment of Kenneth Jordan as small investor representative on Damien, my working name for the successor to the Securities and Investments Board. As Jordan is head of the action group that has made life hell for Knight Williams since the company went into liquidation in 1995, this is rather like David Meller endorsing the late Sir James Goldsmith for his political skills.

Knight Williams insists the support is serious. But there is more. In a letter from Williams to Chancellor Gordon Brown, Jordan is especially commended for his access to confidential information — so much so that Williams has complained to the STB that members have leaked such information to him. The notion of Jordan and MIB in bed together is only marginally less

fanciful than that of Knight Williams supporting him.

● FUN with statistics. The average increase in professional accountants' salaries was 4.7 per cent in the first half of this year, according to Hays Accountancy Personnel. Whoopie, that's almost 10 per cent a year, isn't it? Wrong, because the rise over the entire past year was... 4.7 per cent. So our number-crunchers got nothing at all in the last half of last year. Probably not surprising, because most people's salaries rise on January 1. The piece of research, therefore, is pretty useless. But it came to you from an accountant.

All change

HAMBRO COUNTRY-WIDE has ditched SBC Warburg in favour of Panmure Gordon as house broker. Warburg was the main marketmaker in the company's shares, and the decision was taken "to make sure the broker's interest was 100 per cent aligned with ours". No suggestion that Warburg had been putting its own interests first. Curious: the broker has asked for Hambro Country-wide for as long as anyone can remember, so someone should have thought of it before now.

Panmure was chosen because the broker bought some shares for Hambro during last month's bid for

John D Wood, the posh estate agents.

Ashen-faced

A CRICKET match with a difference at the Honourable Artillery Company ground on City Road today. The annual Financial Ashes will be fought between a team from the Securities Institute, members and employees, and teams of Australian and, rather more loosely, South African City folk. Loosely, because there are probably not 11 South African brokers and bankers in London who can hold a cricket bat, or if there are, they won't be at the HAC ground. So expect plenty of ringers. Last year's event was notable for the hospitalisation of both umpires.



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THE TIMES THURSDAY JULY 24 1997

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ACCOUNTANCY

Capital idea propels Big Six

Peter Gratton explains the surge in sponsorship by leading firms

THE progress of the leading accountancy firms in expanding the services offered by their corporate finance arms has raised some eyebrows in recent years. The latest area in which they have started to compete is that of acting as sponsor to companies seeking a listing. Why have they moved into this area and will it last?

Sponsorship work is a natural progression for the corporate finance arms of the leading accountancy firms. As the *Acquisitions Monthly* league tables show, the leading accountancy practices have developed their corporate finance skills to the point where they now dominate the market for professional advice on unquoted merger and acquisition transactions. Their attention has turned over recent years to lead advisory work in the quoted arena, in respect of both takeovers and listings. But why accountants?

In December 1993 the Stock Exchange amended its rules to allow accountancy firms to become sponsors to companies seeking a listing and the necessary changes to the rules for accountants soon followed. This coincided with a general change in the corporate finance market for smaller companies when some of

the larger merchant banks were focusing away from the smaller end of the market and many companies were losing their sense of loyalty to their traditional advisers, being open to advice from others. The advent of the Alternative Investment Market and the new role of nominated adviser (Nomad) has also enabled accountancy firms to establish a presence in this new market for capital raising. Their perceived quality compared with some of the smaller less well-known traditional houses has also been of significant benefit.

But a key element of the transition has been the change in the skills mix of the Big Six corporate finance arms. Over the past few years these firms have been recruiting bankers, lawyers and brokers, bringing together people with experience across the full spectrum of corporate finance work. Combining this with the existing skill base has meant that the corporate finance teams in the Big Six now have the experience and expertise to execute many of the transactions previously reserved for traditional lead advisers.

Some argue that without distribution facilities the accountants cannot be effective as sponsors. I believe that, to the contrary, it is just this sep-



Peter Gratton says the independence of firms is a plus

aration of the sponsorship advice from the raising of capital that makes the accountants attractive, being able to give advice that can be seen to be genuinely independent of any underwriting commissions. Moreover accountants bring to the transaction a wide range of skills under one roof, such as accounting and tax advice as well as the corporate finance advice. All of these

functions, for example, were essential when Deloitte & Touche Corporate Finance advised on the demerger and acted as sponsors for the flotation of Clubhaus from Ex-Lands, the quoted group, two years ago.

The accountants are making significant progress in this area, but slowly. One of the reasons for this slower pace has been their caution: no Big

Six firm is prepared to put at risk the reputation of its name, and so all are being careful about the clients they are prepared to sponsor.

But accountants will be driving this market forward. We see sponsorship work as a valuable additional service to offer our existing client base, both in the UK and for our international network. So far, it is a small but accelerating revenue stream for us. In March alone Deloitte & Touche Corporate Finance acted as sponsor to two main market listings and Nomad to an AIM float with a combined market capital of some £100 million. In addition we are acting for an increasing number of quoted clients as sponsor or when they embark on substantial acquisitions or disposals, and as their lead financial adviser in public company takeovers.

More significant still is the investment that is being put into building up this area. In my view the Big Six will become an established force in this market within the next few years, offering a service that will be in demand particularly with those companies that, by virtue of their size, have found themselves underserved by their traditional advisers.

Peter Gratton is a Partner at Deloitte & Touche Corporate Finance, part of the UK practice of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu International (DTI).

Risk of pain from cut-price reports

WE MAY be seeing the end of accountants' traditional "mission to explain" a company's results through its annual report and accounts. News that several building societies are taking the route towards summary financial statements is but one sign of this.

It is a fundamental change. Accountants have never before admitted that the language of financial reporting is foreign to those with whom they are trying to communicate. It has always been a basic tenet that a two-way process was in progress. Accountants try to make things more accessible and understandable, the general public gradually expands its knowledge of financial reporting, and eventually the two would meet in the middle. The average intelligent person would have enough of a grasp to feel that a set of good accounts was not a mystery. And the average accountant would be capable of explaining matters in a jargon-free way.

The only alternative to these assumptions is that business and finance is arcane and that only insiders can hope to understand it. That is unacceptable in a pluralist society that tries to be just. It is no surprise that the two efforts in recent years to roll back obfuscation and reveal clarity have met with huge popular acclaim.

Both the work of Sir David Tweedie at the Accounting Standards Board and the books of Terry Smith, the analyst, have had big success. The need to make financial reporting simpler and clearer is growing, rather than diminishing, as you would expect in a more prosperous, better-educated society.

So why is the corporate mood one of giving shareholders summaries rather than the full accounts? The simple answer is cost. It is all very well being a company with a wide shareholder base, but the cost of a set of accounts, in terms of artwork, design, photography and, above all, postage, is high. Summary financial statements are also more attractive to shareholders. They are much shorter, much smaller, and, with attractive graphics, appear more inviting.

So why should the financial reporting profession be wary? The first problem is that companies, when they are extolling the virtue of summary financial statements, start also to explain how these documents can become something more of a corporate brochure. Released from the responsibilities of statutory accounts, companies can wax more

lyrical about what fine organisations they are.

This process can only lead financial reporting back to the bad old days when a smiling chairman would lay on the charm and soft soap in the annual report while the accounts at the back carried a message of impending doom. Summary financial statements do tend to be, as marketing people say, "upbeat".

Companies also argue that in these days of a move towards electronic "real-time" reporting, the thick, paper document is sophisticated investors. The people identified in times of scandal as those who have lost their pensions are not people who scan corporate figures online. One purpose of financial reporting is to protect the vulnerable, who tend not to be technologically, or financially, sophisticated.

The third argument is that accounts are now so overloaded with additional material as a result of the Cadbury code on corporate governance that a limit has been reached in terms of just how much information anyone can cope with. This argument is nonsense. Certainly, there is much more information in accounts as a result, but it is the first increase in useful information for years.

Ask the average sceptical shareholder or user of accounts whether they want more information on the directors, their pay and how they have done their duties or more information on depreciation and you know what the answer will be.

The other argument is that the information, particularly on directors' remuneration and pension provision, is so complex that it is not worth printing. But that is a question to ask actuaries, or the directors. It could all be simpler if directors wished it so.

The final argument, however, is the one that people in the financial reporting world really need to remember. Whenever there has been scandal over a corporate collapse, the argument has centred on the report and accounts. It was quite possible for people to say of Polly Peck, for example, that if shareholders had read and understood Note 23 they would have been wary about the company's financial health. Under a regime of summary financial statements, directors would have to explain why they never sent out the detailed information in the first place. That could be more painful to explain than the figures themselves.



ROBERT BRUCE

Mitchell fights on

PITY poor old Austin Mitchell. For all those years in opposition the indefatigable MP gave the accountancy profession hell with the clear message that once in Government everything would change. But it hasn't. A few weeks ago Mitchell called an adjournment debate on the regulation of the profession, only to find the minister responsible unresponsive to his invective. Last week

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

it happened again. This time it was the regulation of insolvency practitioners. Once again Mitchell inveighed against "the Mafia regulating the Mafia" and this time extended the description to cover the DTI working party considering the issue. This did not amuse Nigel Griffiths, the Minister concerned. "To call its work a sham is unfair, unworthy and untrue," he

said. "We have in Britain one of the best ways of regulating the insolvency profession." Mitchell is finding being in power a bit of a trial.

On course

THE English ICA, ever keen to improve its image, if not its reputation, has appointed another set of public relations advisers. This time Ludgate

Communications is to have a go at the £500,000 account. In particular, it will have to think up a successor to the institute's poster campaign, which aimed to distinguish its members from all the other UK accounting bodies.

Rumours in Moorgate Place suggest the new slogan will be a simple one. Something like: "We're more chartered than them".

Spot rates

THE next recession cannot be too far away. Accountancy recruitment agencies are announcing record and rising salaries for accountants. Some of it could be self-fulfilling. Hays Accountancy Personnel announce today that 82 per cent of accountants who resign their job are being offered a pay rise on the spot. No wonder the graphs move ever upwards.

ROBERT BRUCE

Court of Appeal

Habeas corpus order is criminal

Cuoghi v Governor of Brixton Prison and Another
Before Lord Justice Beldam, Lord Justice Roch and Lord Justice Sullivan
[Judgment July 15]

An order relating to the obtaining of evidence for the purposes of a habeas corpus application in extradition proceedings was a criminal cause or matter within the meaning of section 18(1)(a) of the Supreme Court Act 1981. Accordingly, the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal had no jurisdiction to entertain an appeal against such an order.

The Court of Appeal so held, determining as a preliminary issue that it had no jurisdiction to entertain an appeal by Sergio Cuoghi from Mr Justice Carnwath who had set aside an order of Mr Justice Funnell made on Mr Cuoghi's application for the issue of letters of request under section 3 of the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Act 1990 for evidence in support of his application for habeas corpus in reliance on section 18(1)(a) of the Extradition Act 1949.

The Bow Street Metropolitan Magistrate had committed Mr Cuoghi in custody under the 1949 Act on a request by the Swiss Government for his extradition to Switzerland to face charges of fraud against Credit Suisse Fides Trust SA.

Section 11 of the 1990 Act provides: "(3) The court shall order the applicant's discharge if it appears to the court in relation to the offence ... in respect of which

the applicant's return is sought, that ... (c) because the accusation against him is not made in good faith in the interests of justice, it would, having regard to all the circumstances, be unjust or oppressive to return him."

Mr Clive Nicholls, QC and Mr James Lewis for Mr Cuoghi; Mr Paul Garlick, QC, for the Swiss Government; Mr James Turner for the Home Secretary.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE referred to the wording of section 18(1)(a) of the 1981 Act that "no appeal shall lie to the Court of Appeal from any judgment of the High Court in any criminal cause or matter" and said that the question whether the Civil Division had jurisdiction to entertain Mr Cuoghi's appeal depended on the answer to three questions:

1 Did extradition proceedings fall within the statutory expression "criminal cause or matter"?
2 Did an application for habeas corpus made in extradition proceedings fall within the statutory expression?

The answer was unquestionably "Yes". If there were any doubt about that, it was resolved by *In re Levin* [1997] 3 WLR 117.

3 Did an application for habeas corpus made in extradition proceedings fall within the statutory expression?

It was artificial to filter out section 11(3) from that coherent series of provisions and attribute to it a nature and character different from the process of which it formed part.

His Lordship also referred to authority which followed and approved that case. In particular *Amin v Home Secretary* and *Minister of Defence of Royal Netherlands Government* [1993] AC 147, 156 and 162.

He rejected Mr Nicholls' argument that an application under section 11(3), whether advanced as a habeas corpus application or not, was a special free-standing procedure and distinct from the Swiss criminal proceedings which founded the application to extradite.

Accepting Mr Garlick's submission, His Lordship concluded that Part III of the 1989 Act, comprising sections 7 to 17, set out a comprehensive code to govern extradition in present circumstances. Section 11(3) formed part of a comprehensive provision for what was accepted as being a criminal proceeding.

It was artificial to filter out section 11(3) from that coherent series of provisions and attribute to it a nature and character different from the process of which it formed part.

3 Did an order relating to obtaining evidence for purposes of a habeas corpus application in extradition proceedings fall within the statutory expression?

The answer was again "Yes" for the following reasons:

(a) It was a clear principle to be derived from the authorities that if the main substantive proceedings in question were criminal, incidental or ancillary proceedings thereto were similarly to be treated as criminal; hence the role that habeas corpus applications incidental or ancillary to extradition proceedings were regarded as criminal because extradition proceedings were so regarded.

His Lordship stressed that in using the words "incidental or ancillary" he was not intending to propound any new and different test but was expressing the gist of what he understood the authoritative test to be.

(b) Orders relating to the production of evidence for foreign criminal proceedings were themselves to be treated as criminal; see *Boonani v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [1985] QB 675.

It would be anomalous if an order relating to the production of evidence for the purposes of English proceedings regarded as criminal were not itself to be regarded as criminal.

(c) An affirmative answer was fortified by consideration of the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (CM 1928) which the 1990 Act enabled the United Kingdom to ratify.

It was that procedure which Mr Cuoghi through the medium of the 1990 Act was seeking to invoke. It was plain that the conditions existed to provide for international co-operation between states party to the Convention in the prosecution of crime. It had no civil purpose. Thus the content of the present proceedings was criminal and the context lent its colour to the section 11(3) application as to other parts of the proceedings.

(d) To rely on section 3 of the 1990 Act Mr Cuoghi was compelled to assert that the conditions in section 3(1)(a) and (b) were fulfilled, namely the existence of an offence and of proceedings or investigations in connection with it. That demonstrated the closeness of the connection between the section 3 application and the criminal proceedings which the Swiss government were seeking to extradite him to face.

The questions posed by Mr Turner were pertinent to consider: What was the purpose of the application? Was it a step in the process of bringing a defendant to trial? Could it affect the conduct of the trial?

In the light of those questions and the authorities the third question should be answered affirmatively. From that it followed that the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal had no jurisdiction to entertain the appeal, being an appeal from a judgment of the High Court in a criminal cause or matter.

Lord Justice Kennedy and Lord Justice Sullivan agreed.

Solicitors: Judge Sykes Ffron: CFS, HCQ, Treasury Solicitor.

Law Report July 24 1997

Appropriation outwith jurisdiction

Regina v Ngan
Before Lord Justice Leggatt, Mr Justice Funnell and Mr Justice Collins
[Judgment July 11]

A person who, knowing that money had been mistakenly paid into his bank account in England, signed blank cheques on that account and sent them to her sister in Scotland, did not in so doing commit an act of appropriation within the jurisdiction.

She was, however, guilty of an offence against English law when one of the cheques which necessitated a cheque drawn on that account and sent them to her sister in Scotland, did not in so doing commit an act of appropriation within the jurisdiction.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held when allowing in part the appeal of *Su Lin Ngan* against her conviction by a majority on December 19, 1996 at Southwark Crown Court (Judge Laurie and a jury) of three counts of theft.

Conviction on two of the counts, relating to cheques which were presented in Scotland, were quashed. Her appeal against conviction on the third count, which related to a cheque presented for payment in England, was dismissed. Her appeal against a sentence of two years detention in a young offender institution was allowed and a sentence of 15 months was substituted.

Section 3 of the Theft Act 1968 provides: "(1) A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another to which he is not entitled. It is immaterial whether or not the property has been appropriated, and whether or not the property has been appropriated by the person to whom it belongs."

Section 3(1) of the 1968 Act provides: "(1) A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another to which he is not entitled. It is immaterial whether or not the property has been appropriated, and whether or not the property has been appropriated by the person to whom it belongs."

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without stealing it, any later assumption of a right to it by keeping or dealing with it as owner."

Ms Lauren Soerist, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals for the appellant, Mr Peter Gray for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE LEGGATT, giving the reserved judgment of the court, said that the outcome of the appeal depended upon whether or not, as an ingredient of the theft, the appellant had committed an act of appropriation within the jurisdiction.

As a condition of her employment she opened an account on August 11, 1995 with a London branch of Barclays Bank. The account number allocated to her had previously been that of a debt collecting agency.

Several payments intended for the agency were made into the account by mistake, amounting to a total of £77,767.25p. Payments were also made for the credit of the account from the appellant's employers and small withdrawals were made from time to time not exceeding the latter credit balance.

Between September 25 and October 9, 1995 cheques were presented for payment in the respective sums of £25,000, £16,000 and £10,000. They were paid because the mistake was not discovered until November 8, 1995.

The appellant when interviewed said that she had signed the blank cheques and sent them to her sister in Glasgow, who had known that she had received the extra money. Two cheques had been presented for payment in Glasgow and the third in Peterborough.

The trial judge rejected a submission of no case to answer made on the ground that no offence had been committed within the jurisdiction. He viewed the theft as a joint enterprise between the appellant and her sister and regarded the appropriation as having taken place in this country because the account, the chose in action and the paying bank were all situated in England. However, his reason for that conclusion was wrong: see *R v Governor of Pentonville Prison, Ex parte Osman* [1990] 1 WLR 277.

On each of the three counts the appellant was charged with stealing a chose in action, namely a credit balance belonging to the debt collecting agency. Since it could not be disputed that the appellant had acted dishonestly, it was common ground that she was guilty of theft if the offence had been committed within the jurisdiction.

The question therefore was a simple one: was there any act within the jurisdiction which amounted to an appropriation by the appellant of the rights of the owner?

Applying the principle set out in *Osman* (at p294) to the present case, the act of theft was the presentation of the cheque. Until then no right as against the bank had been exercised.

All that had occurred before-hand, including the signing of the cheques, had been preparatory acts. She who supplied the signed, blank cheques, which were to be used to steal from the debt collecting agency, was an aider and abettor of the theft, even though she was in England when

the trial judge rejected a submission of no case to answer made on the ground that no offence had been committed within the jurisdiction. He viewed the theft as a joint enterprise between the appellant and her sister and regarded the appropriation as having taken place in this country because the account, the chose in action and the paying bank were all situated in England. However, his reason for that conclusion was wrong: see *R v Governor of Pentonville Prison, Ex parte Osman* [1990] 1 WLR 277.

On each of the three counts the appellant was charged with stealing a chose in action, namely a credit balance belonging to the debt collecting agency. Since it could not be disputed that the appellant had acted dishonestly, it was common ground that she was guilty of theft if the offence had been committed within the jurisdiction.

The question therefore was a simple one: was there any act within the jurisdiction which amounted to an appropriation by the appellant of the rights of the owner?

Applying the principle set out in *Osman* (at p294) to the present case, the act of theft was the presentation of the cheque. Until then no right as against the bank had been exercised.

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the cheques were presented in Scotland.

As such, she would be liable to be convicted as a principal in relation to a theft offence committed in Scotland. Viewed as a joint enterprise, that was where it was effected. It would not be enough to give the English court jurisdiction that her part in the theft was carried out in England: compare *R v Toms* [1985] Crim LR 369.

When the appellant sent the cheques in blank to her sister, she intended to appropriate such sums as her sister proved to insert into any of the cheques that she used. The appropriation was inchoate. In their Lordships' judgment, no right was assumed to the part of the appellant's credit balance that was not hers until a cheque was presented for payment in a sum which necessarily drew upon the debt collecting agency. That represented an assertion of a right adverse to the debt collecting agency to have the cheque met by the bank.

The result was that on the two occasions that a cheque was presented in Scotland no offence was committed within the jurisdiction, but an offence was committed when the third cheque was presented in Peterborough.

Justice Act 1993 came into force it would render irrelevant where any act occurred proof of which was required for conviction of theft. Meanwhile the appellant's offence was acquired on counts 1 and 2 of the indictment and her appeal dismissed in relation to count 3.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Southwark.

Discrimination claim fails

Tattari v Private Patients Plan
Before Lord Justice Beldam, Lord Justice Roch and Lord Justice Sullivan
[Judgment July 15]

Private Patients Plan, the provider of medical and health care insurance cover, was not, within the meaning of section 12 of the Race Relations Act 1976, an authority or body which could confer an authorisation or qualification which was needed for, or facilitated engagement in a particular profession or trade.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal by Dr Christakaki Tattari from a decision by the Employment Appeal Tribunal on May 3, 1996, of her appeal from the dismissal by an industrial tribunal, sitting at Ashford, on August 15, 1993, of her complaint that PPP had discriminated against her on the ground of race contrary to section 11(b) of the 1976 Act.

Dr Tattari asked to be added to PPP's list of specialists in December 1994. In March 1995 she was informed that PPP could not grant her specialist recognition according to its rules which required her to hold or have held a substantive NHS consultant post or to hold a certificate of higher specialist training given by the higher specialist training committee of the Royal College of Surgeons. PPP did not recognise any EEC certificate of higher specialist training for the purposes of its rules.

After qualifying as a doctor at Athens University she came to the United Kingdom and in 1979 was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. She was granted an EEC specialist certificate in plastic and reconstructive surgery by Athens University in 1980 and since 1988 had been in private practice in London.

The General Medical Council maintained a specialist list in accordance with article 6 of the Medical Qualifications (EEC Recognition) Order 1977 No 837. Dr Tattari's name was added to that list in 1993 and she was thus recognised by the General Medical Council as having the right to practise plastic surgery in the United Kingdom.

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His Lordship said that PPP was not an authority or body within the meaning of section 12 of the 1976 Act. He considered that the section had to be read as a whole and not construed piecemeal. The kind of bodies referred to were those similar to authorities which were empowered to grant qualifications or recognition for the purpose of practising a profession, calling, trade or activity.

Thus he considered that section 12, referring as it did to an authority or body which conferred recognition or approval referred to a body which had the power or authority to confer on a person a professional qualification or other approval needed to enable him to practise a profession, exercise a calling or take part in some other activity.

It did not refer to a body which was not authorised to or empowered to confer such qualification but which stipulated that for the purpose of its commercial agreements, a particular qualification was required.

Lord Justice Roch and Lord Justice Sullivan agreed.

Solicitors: Mr C. G. Hughes; Lawrence Graham.

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown watches an English rose bloom among Paris's chattering yuppies in *Portraits Chinois*

Helena joins the French collection

Once upon a time you knew where you were with Helena Bonham Carter. You were in Merchant Ivory's Edwardian England: she was wearing petticoats. But since she cut her Pre-Raphaelite tresses, the world is her oyster. In *Margaret's Room* she was a greasy-haired urchin in a Nova Scotia coal-mining community in the 1940s. Now, in *Portraits Chinois*, she is an English girl, Ada by name, living in contemporary Paris, speaking French, working as a fashion designer in a house run by Jean-Claude Brialy.

Having a mother who is half-French clearly helped her. For when Bonham Carter speaks you rarely hear the inflections of an English beauty, educated at public school, poking through the pursed vowels, grimaces and Gallic exhalations.

She talks a lot, too. All the characters do. Over several years they talk about love, desire, their apartments, their careers (either fashion or film-making). Much is said. Much is uninvolved, not because of deficiencies in the smart cast, but because the director, Martine Dugowson, rarely looks under the surface. These chatterboxes come to the screen with no past history (the exception is Lisa, the apprentice designer played by Romane Bohringer, whom Ada sees as a threat). We struggle to know what makes them tick, and to care about their liaisons.

Ada's boyfriend Paul, a screenwriter (Jean-Philippe Ecoffey), attracts Lisa's attention. Lisa, however, is being encouraged to team up with Paul's writing partner Guido (Serge Castellito), who has just split up with his girlfriend. Circling round them are other affairs and a pregnancy.

Possibly another director, working from another script, could have made these seem events of great moment, at least for as long as the film lasted. Woody Allen, perhaps. Or the veteran Eric Rohmer, France's best connoisseur of talkative trifles. But Dugowson, mounting her follow-up to *Mina Tannenbaum*, an observant study in friendship, hamstrings her cast with a shallow and overstretched script. Even with 15 minutes cut from the original running time we still wish to bid these people adieu a long time before the film does. Maybe the next time Bonham Carter speaks perfect French, the words will be worth hearing.

If characters and incident seem out of balance in *Portraits Chinois*, *Palookaville* juggles the two far more adeptly. The setting is somewhere in New Jersey, geographically close to Manhattan's bright lights but spiritually stuck in the provinces. The characters are would-be crooks, eager to rob their way to prosperity. I could be describing your average American independent movie, pock-marked with blood and the f-word and in thrall to the t-word (Tarantino).



Helena Bonham Carter brushes up her French vocabulary to play the part of a fashion designer caught up in liaisons not very *dangereuses* in Martine Dugowson's talk-heavy *Portraits Chinois*

In fact, Alan Taylor's first feature, written by David Epstein, pursues other characteristics. Warm-hearted humour. Sweetness and light. The influence of the postwar stories of Italo Calvino, filtered through Italian film comedies alive to the quirks of ordinary life like *Big Deal on Madonna Street*. Like Mario Monicelli's film, this is a tale of bungling. In the opening minutes, a jeweller's shop is the target, but the building next door, a pastry shop, gets hit.

The perpetrators, unemployed, do not have the home life of hardened criminals. One (William Forsythe) lives with dogs. Another (Vincent Gallo), striving so hard to be Mr Big, lives with his mother, his sister and her husband, a cop. Another (Adam Trese) clings to his wife and kid, and is reluctant to participate. But empty pockets lure them all

Portraits Chinois
Curzon Phoenix, 15,
122 mins
Helena Bonham Carter
talks and talks in French

Palookaville
Curzon Mayfair, 15, 92 mins
Engaging movie about
would-be crooks

Lovel! Valour!
Compassion!
ABC Swiss Centre, 15,

114 mins
Artificial Smugglers! Bad
direction!
Broken English
Warner West End, 18,
93 mins

Bogged-down drama from
New Zealand

Idiot Box
National Film Theatre,
83 mins
Engaging Aussie portrait
of thick young criminals

onwards. They watch the 1950 B-movie *Armored Car Robbery* to get ideas. That robbery, too, goes haywire: life lets them down, yet again.

Taylor, a New York University graduate with an award-winning short and TV work to his credit, pitches the film as a realistic piece with fairy-tale trimmings. He keeps a tight

rein on visual tricks, lending characters and settings weave their spell. Today we are unaccustomed to such good manners, and *Palookaville* may seem low in incident to viewers in need of an adrenalin rush. But to anyone wondering which way humane cinema went, this small-scale delight points the way.

The first inkling that *Lovel! Valour! Compassion!* is going to get on one's nerves occurs in the opening seconds. A harmonious voice is rhapsodising on the soundtrack about his lakeside country house: built in 1895, he warbles, and still with its original roof! That may impress America's estate agents, but it is hardly a selling point over here. Then the house owner's guests, all gay males, arrive and mingle: Arthur and Perry, accountant and lawyer, almost an old married couple; Ramon, the Puerto Rican dancer acutely aware of his sex appeal; Buzz, the musical comedy aficionado with a biting tongue; John Jeckyll, an English musician, aloof, mean-spirited.

To anyone familiar with Terrence McNally's off-Broadway play of 1994, they are all old pals. So are the players: with the exception of Jason Alexander, who replaces Nathan Lane as Buzz, the film reunites the original cast. McNally adapts his own text. The original director, Joe Mantello, directs again, showing minimal interest in cinematic matters. Perhaps the film's cosy elitism, smugness almost, comes in part from the production's inbreeding.

Mostly the source lies in McNally's script. As this houseful bicker, manoeuvre and nurture each other through three summer weekends, the characters grow to seem more like stereotypes than people, brazenly manipulated by the dramatist for comic, sentimental, or melodramatic ends. Jokes come easily to Buzz, the HIV-positive Broadway queen, but amusing lines about revivals of *The King and I* cannot in themselves sustain the film, or add bite to its treatment of AIDS. The undue concern for effect shows again when John Jeckyll's twin brother James arrives, sweetness and light compared to his dark bile. On stage, John Glover's tour de force in both roles won him a Tony award; on film, the stunt loses its punch.

Joe Mantello has a particular part to play, too: any artifice or jarring mood is immediately highlighted by his static direction. For all the film's flashes of wit or tenderness, there are enough irritants here to put your back up, whatever your sexual stripe.

Over to New Zealand now for *Broken English*, a story of cultural assimilation with Cro-

atian immigrants, a Maori working in a Chinese restaurant, and two Chinese sweethearts anxious to make "little Kiwis". This is fruitful material, though director Gregor Nicholas and Robin Scholes, producer of *Once Were Warriors*, restrict the film's appeal by styling it as a heavy drama of star-crossed lovers.

The Croatian father Ivan, proud and volatile, sets the tone, solving arguments with a baseball bat and imprisoning his own daughter for daring to become the Maori's lover and getting pregnant. Rade Serbedzija, the Croatian actor now rampaging through international movies, settles in for a long rage. Aleksandra Vujic's Nina and her boyfriend (Julian Arahanga) are more persuasive, though not enough to make their problems electrify audiences.

If New Zealand disappoints, Australia comes to the rescue with *Idiot Box*, the week's second film about would-be criminals. This has a tarter taste than *Palookaville*, though there is still something likeable about Kev and Mick, young layabouts who rattle round the suburbs drinking, arguing, mischief-making and watching TV (hence the title). They imagine themselves street-smart. Key especially, in fact they are dumb, never more so than when they acquire guns and concoct a bank robbery.

The director, David Caesar, trains a hip, quirky eye on these sad clowns, vividly portrayed by Ben Mendelsohn and Jeremy Sims. Visual interest is considerable: Caesar even makes police sticking pins in a map seem exciting. Sound, too, is inventively used. A film worth seeking out.

'Intelligent and enjoyable'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

Intelligent and really quite enjoyable.



PORTRAITS CHINOIS
Sarah Crook, 18: The French sure can make movies. C'est magnifique! Damian Samuels, 20: Imagine the French doing *Peter's Friends* — or *Les Amis de Pierre* — and this would probably be the outcome. The only difference, unfortunately, is that this is as dull as ditchwater.
Tim Thornton, 21: Helena Bonham Carter comes over all cute and French in this average friends and relationships movie that doesn't really achieve anything or get anywhere.
Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 18: Don't be put off by the subtitles. *Portraits Chinois* is

BROKEN ENGLISH
Sarah: A film about falling in love with the enemy. The best of this week's movies.
Damian: A multicultural *Fiddler on the Roof* set Down Under, with some very comic symbolism at the important moments.
Tim: A powerful and moving film of race, love, politics and mixed marriage.
Leslie: Cliché after cliché. A Kiwi *Romeo and Juliet*.

NEW VIDEOS: A fine portrait of childhood; and an absurd view of nuns

Ugly duckling comes good

WELCOME TO THE DOLLHOUSE
Artificial Eye, 15, 1996
TODD SOLONDZ's compelling and unsettling comedy, full of remembered pain, contemplates the awful life of Diane Wiener, an 11-year-old geek at Benjamin Franklin Junior High. "Why do you hate me?" she asks a schoolmate. "Because you're ugly." She's also not very lovable, and it says much for Solondz that they continue to engage our sympathy for this outcast. Available to rent and buy.

BEHIND CONVENT WALLS
Redemption, 18, 1977
A NUN pricks her finger handling roses. Close-up of her sucking her finger for sexual longing. Far for the course in a film directed by Walerian Borowczyk, Polish animator turned art-house pornographer. This stately specimen of his dubious trade, based on a Stendahl novel, revels in fetishistic detail and the piquant looks of black-and-white nuns liberating themselves against dazzlingly coloured backgrounds. Difficult to watch, with a straight face.

THE FRIGHTENERS
CIC, 18, 1996
THIS represented something of a backward step for Kiwi director Peter Jackson after



Heather Matarazzo in *Welcome to the Dollhouse*

Heavenly Creatures, though fans of garbled fantasy movies may find delight in its tale of a swindling ghost exorcist (Michael J. Fox) faced with genuine ectoplasm. Hollywood's budget ensures smooth special effects, but does nothing to stop jokes falling flat or the script blundering between comedy and horror. Available to rent.

great Sergei Eisenstein reconstructs the "ten days that shook the world" in October 1917, when the Bolsheviks brought down Kerensky's government. The director's methods are as revolutionary as the material: rapid-fire editing, elaborate montages, extensive use of metaphors. Characters may occasionally seem submerged in the visual fireworks, but it only needs the Winter Palace to be stormed or St Petersburg's bridges to be raised for the film to recover. The video uses the sound version prepared in 1967, with a score by Shostakovich.

THE STARMAKER
Fox Home Entertainment, 18, 1996
ADMIRERS of Giuseppe Tornatore's *Cinema Paradiso* may have their loyalties tested by the director's latest love letter to the cinema and to Sicilian life. The images are pretty in a postcard kind of way, but the story about a shyster from Rome who dupes villagers out of their money by posing as a film-studio talent scout is too drawn out and generates rather bogus emotions. However, the non-professional players are moderately pleasing, and Sergio Castellitto works very hard to make the lead character interesting. Available to rent.

GEOFF BROWN

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NT Royal National Theatre

Guys and Dolls

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Gershwin triumphs, wet or dry

Summertime, and the opera-goer should be easy. It wasn't last weekend at the Bregenz Festival, where the floods sweeping Central Europe pushed up water levels on Lake Constance and drove the first two performances of a spectacular new *Porgy and Bess* indoors. But if Bregenz has not been immune to the weather, it remains as resistant as ever to the operatic conservatism that pervades most of Austria: given in tandem with this uncompromising *Porgy* is a revival of Anton Rubinstein's long-neglected masterpiece, *The Demon*.

And thanks to the vision of Alfred Wopmann, the canny Intendant who operates on a mixture of idealism and realism, more innovation can be expected before he leaves the festival in 2002. This season has seen the addition of a versatile rehearsal space that will also be used for performances of experimental works, sometimes dance or drama, but in 1998 the premiere of the Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Haas's chamber opera *Nacht*, based on texts by Hölderlin. Next year's rainy in the Festspielhaus is Montemurro's *L'amore dei re*, and in 1999 it will be Martinů's *Greek Passion*, staged by David Pountney and Stefanos Lazaridis in a co-production with Covent Garden due in London the following year.

The new rehearsal space proved itself already this summer, allowing detailed work on Götz Friedrich's *Porgy* production to continue during the unseasonable rain. Whenever thunderstorms previously caused disruption, straightforward concert performances had to be given indoors, but here we got a fully costumed, fully choreographed show, though without Hans Schavernoch's epic highway

OPERA *Porgy and Bess* Bregenz Festival

structure which stood empty outside, but will come into use later. Still, the costumes (Sue Wilmington), graffiti-covered backdrops and graphic signs of urban decay all make the producer's concept clear, and with yellow schoolbags on earthquake-ravaged freeways, and heartless white cops tormenting a black community, this updating moves Catfish Row to present-day Los Angeles. Stereotyping is avoided, and the work emerges as a powerful piece of social criticism, just as relevant as when it was composed 60 years ago.

One gain from the temporary move indoors was that the amplification could be switched off: Andrew Litton was able to give a carefully balanced account of Gershwin's score, almost as idiomatic as he did at Covent Garden a few years ago, though there were times when the Vienna Symphony Orchestra needed to "let go" a little more. The very even cast was led by Arthur Woodley's dignified *Porgy* and Marquita Lister's glamorously sung *Bess*, her character a bundle of contradictions. Jeff LaVar's Crown may have been cast more for his pectoral rather than vocal rousings, but Eric Lee Johnson was a witty Sporting Life and the chorus (Harlem Singers) strong.

Musically, at least, *The Demon* was even better. Rubinstein's 1875 score, a vital, "missing link" in the history of Russian opera, was vindicated by Vladimir Fedoseyev in a deeply resonant performance. Based on Lermontov's dramatic poem about the supernatural se-



Hans Schavernoch's *Porgy* set, an epic structure on the lake at Bregenz, will be used when the floods abate. Meanwhile, Götz Friedrich's staging goes on indoors

duction of the mortal Tamara by a fallen angel, the work was the first to bring complex emotions into Russian opera, and there was no hint of cardboard characterisation here. The bass-baritone Egils Silins was commanding as the isolated but not evil *Demon*, and the

soprano Marina Mescheriakova a rich-voiced Tamara. With other roles filled by Slavonic singers, and choruses drawn from Moscow and Sofia, the sound was stirring.

Aware that the work still needs careful handling, the Australian producer Neil Armfield, soon to

stage *Billy Budd* for Welsh National Opera but making his European debut here, adopted a naive, open-eyed approach. Carl Friedrich Oberle's simple designs, with a rolling backcloth that evoked Vrubel's famous Lermontov-inspired paintings, had beautiful

simplicity, but at times there was too much costume-drama and not enough psycho-drama.

In some ways the work looks forward to Russian symbolism and such operas as Prokofiev's *Flery Angel*, and balancing this and its rather more conventional aspects is

a special challenge that was not quite met. But with a Houston production of *The Demon* in prospect and Wexford's not forgotten, Bregenz has confirmed that the opera deserves reassessment.

JOHN ALLISON

Elgar with a difference

"THEY'LL clap at anything, this audience," remarked my neighbour, after Steven Isserlis's performance of the Elgar Cello Concerto. "Bring back Paul Tortelier, I say." Imperfect maybe, but he was touching on two important points. The first is that 5,700 people had chosen to hear the Concerto and Bruckner's Ninth Symphony played by a regional orchestra. When else, where else could this happen? These listeners wouldn't clap at "anything" but they were appreciative in the best sense of the word.

The second point is that if anyone was looking for their "own" Elgar as heard on best loved recordings, Isserlis was going to disappoint them. This was not an Elgar for the display of high passion, but seemed to well up from the aftermath of exhaustion. The descent of the famous melody came dropping slowly: all the regret, but little of the sculpted tensions one is used to. Sometimes, he seemed to reach past enervation and into a dream world, where a certain detachment crept in (as in the Scherzo) or a sense of timelessness as in the final Moderato. He was restrained in all climaxes until the Moderato's final cadence, to which point of hushed intensity he moved with a liquid legato.

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales accompanied

BBC PROMS HELEN WALLACE

well. They began with Mendelssohn's overture *Ruy Blas* which can be safely consigned to the justly neglected masterpiece pile. It is full of standard sequences, which kept the orchestra busy but failed to dazzle. Taking on Bruckner's Ninth in the second half was a tall order: the work is one of the most exposing in the repertoire. Stuffed full of brass interjections, the challenge is to find coherence across an arena of distant sonorities. Opening horn and trumpet calls did not augur well, but the performance warmed as it progressed. The Scherzo was demonic and some powerful string playing made for a memorable Adagio.

One wished for a stronger hand on the work from Otaka who didn't push the first movement on. After so magisterial an opening the second theme should melt into its flowing quavers; here it was held in check. Towards the end of the Adagio the horns came together in some glistening chords whose stillness made for a magical ending.

HELEN WALLACE

Cinematic cocktail

IRVING BERLIN was right: the melody does linger on. If Woody Allen can pull in the crowds with the songs of yore in *Everyone Says I Love You*, then Steve Ross, prince of the Manhattan saloons, should be assured of an appreciative audience for some years.

You will not find Julia Roberts or Goldie Hawn draped across the piano in his Knightsbridge residency. Ross prefers to enlist memories of Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell and others in his debonair celebration of songs from the cinema. Although he is not averse to laying on the camp and kitsch, his presentation and cocktail humour are as sharp as the parting in his slicked-down hair.

His passion for Cole Porter drew him to the songwriter's contribution to the obscure 1937 film *Rosalie*, crowned by a shimmering treatment of *In the Still of the Night*.

The British singer Robert Haberman then made an engaging guest appearance in homage to the double-act of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, relishing the wit of lines such

CABARET Steve Ross Pizza On The Park

as "Like Webster's Dictionary, we're Morocco-bound". Ross's abrupt transition to modern times in *Everybody's Talking*, from *Midnight Cowboy*, was slightly jarring. Hearing him searching for depictions in Barbara Streisand's *Evergreen* only brought to mind the "moon-tune" parody that we heard earlier on the Gershwin's *Blah, Blah, Blah*. Ross's voice is not conventionally pretty. What it lacks in tonal depth it more than makes up for in buoyant phrasing, cushioned by effervescent piano chords. Putting on the *Ritz* and *They All Laughed* were dispatched with brio, while on *They Can't Take That Away From Me* the slowing of the tempo and casual, bluesy ambience were proof that Ross's range extends well beyond that of a Park Avenue dandy.

CLIVE DAVIS

THEATRE: A fine revival of Duras's dark 30-year-old classic; plus Friel's puzzling 30-year-old tale of doom



Outwardly civilised: Julie Christie (Suzanna) and Aden Gillett (Michel), her lover, in a moody drama about female psychology, marital analysis and understated conflicts

A hell of a marriage

IT IS February on the coast near St Tropez. The wind blows, and so, from time to time, does a wistful woodwind, punctuated by a doleful double-bass. The sea glumly whooshes. Black crags are visible below a tall, gloomy door whose sides are brushed by thin, wizened trees. You aren't surprised to learn that the couple who own this Gallic Mandala have split up. The wife tried to kill herself or someone tried to kill her. Either way, they were hardly a fun pair inhabiting a place for fun people.

It is the perfect setting for Marguerite Duras. The moment Julie Christie glides onstage at the Minerva, smiling forlornly above her chic black overcoat, you know this will be one of the dramatist's moodier exercises in female psychology and marital analysis. Instead of dramatic cut and thrust, you will get nudge and hint. The emotions, like Johan Engels's set, will be dark and hidden. Hypersensitivity will rule — and why not?

I must confess that Duras's work sets off something bland, male and impatient in me; but there is no doubting its class, especially when as physically

Suzanna Andlor Chichester

elegant and emotionally fine an actress as Christie is in control. She is Suzanna Andlor, wife of a wealthy, faithless Parisian. She is in St Tropez partly to find a place to rent in August — hence her presence in this musty, deserted mansion — and partly to carry on an affair with a journalist called Michel.

Christie's Suzanna has scenes with Aden Gillett's Michel, who is a lot more in love with her than she is with him, and, her arms defensively if politely folded, with Julie Legrand's poised yet uneasy Monique, who is one of her husband's ex-mistresses. The tone is civilised, unemotional. The dialogue is sometimes more obfuscating than informative, for lies are habitual in this world. But gradually the portrait of a marriage emerges in shadowy silhouette; and pretty dreadful it looks.

We never meet Jean Andlor, but Duras evokes his restless, male and impatient in me; but there is no doubting its class, especially when as physically

Jean has known Michel's identity long before the quietly climactic phone call in which Suzanna thinks she is telling him of the affair for the first time. But that old tag, *ne se voit pas*, sums up much. They have given up on their marriage, yet still need to be married to each other.

It is that mixture of feeling — baffling to ourselves, maddening to those trying to sturm their fortress — which makes a 30-year-old play worth the capable revival Linda Davies has given it. Its understated conflicts still absorb, and still present a formidable challenge to the leading actress. Here is a woman marooned in a weird emotional hinterland, in which she simultaneously wants to kill her husband, kill herself, protect her husband, protect herself, preserve her marriage and finish it: yet nothing can be up-front.

Thus the weariness of soul that Christie suggests is as carefully controlled as it is deeply ingrained. Strained smiles conceal her true ennui, and when despair momentarily strikes, she actually has her back to us. Disappointing? To those who like her drama visceral, yes. But that is the way Duras wanted it.

BENEDICT
NIGHTINGALE

Pale post mortem

Lovers Riverside Studios

IT IS 30 years since Brian Friel wrote this puzzling piece, and it hasn't got any easier with time. Two actors on a bare stage re-enact the last hours of a young teenage couple studying for their exams on a sunny hillside in Co Tyrone. A female voice-over, the kind that walks you through reconstructed crimes as if the participants were the victims of some awful Jeffrey Archer plot, tells you what they had for breakfast, what the weather forecast was, and the mysterious fatal boat ride that cost them their lives.

Between the joists of this narrative, Mag and Joe act like any disgruntled young couple who've been saddled with a pregnancy and shotgun wedding. The sweltering heat of Studio 3 adds another — all too palpable — dimension of discomfort to Joe's disillusion and Mag's propensity to bore.

The play swings like a pendulum between Mag and Joe's arguments on the hillside and chunks of creepy reportage. On the one hand, Friel weighs us down with documentary; the impersonal facts after the event, the impact of the drownings on the families. On the other, we have the

disarming chemistry of two 17-year-olds whose hopes and fears are alive, banal and familiar.

Why did they die? Yvonne A. K. Johnson's production makes it clear that Mag and Joe are not simply victims waiting for a boat accident. Yet there is frustration too because not enough happens to exploit the feeling that one of them might have triggered something horrible on the boat. Surely that must be the manipulative point of this juggling act.

For one, didn't feel manipulated enough. But I suspect the opportunity for a truly compelling double-bluff was never in the writing in the first place. Ruth Kavanagh and David Eastman are good at putting the local colour into their characters' cheeks, he grudgingly doing the right thing by her; she, just 17, already sounding painfully middle-aged. I'm not sure I would wish them on anyone.

JAMES
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WALT WHITMAN, great caroller of life and the body electric, visionary and Bard of Democracy, once wrote an essay titled *Art Singing and Heart Singing*. His plea for a new music for a new-found land, and his own poetry, with its self-confessed indebtedness to European opera, find the perfect champion in the American baritone and adopted European, Thomas Hampson.

Hampson unearthed 400 settings while preparing this disc, and he has chosen 22, ranging from Stanford grandiloquently hymning the soul, to Bernstein setting an unpublished Whitman fragment. Three short interpolated poetry readings confirm Hampson's commitment to the fearless word power which

rolls out of Whitman's verse, and is answered by Craig Rutberg's robust piano accompaniment.

My own favourites, and those songs which live deep inside Whitman's own nerve system, feel the pulsing of his blood, are the African-American Henry Thacker Burleigh's Ethiopia saluting the colors of 1915, Charles Ives's maverick *Walt Whitman*, and Michael Tilson Thomas's thrillingly eloquent and big-hearted *We two boys together clinging*, written specially for Hampson in 1993.

ORCHESTRAL Barry Millington

■ WAGNER
Das Liebesmahl des Apostels etc.
Choruses/Dresden
Philharmonie/Plasoun
EMI CDC5 56358 2 ***
£15.99

OF ALL Wagner's lesser-known works, *The Love-Feast of the Apostles* is perhaps the least likely to earn a regular place in the repertoire. Some 20 minutes of forbiddingly unaccompanied male chorus lead to a five-minute peroration with full orchestra. But Plasoun's new recording, with first-rate singers from Vienna

and Dresden, shows that the a cappella writing does not have to be turgid, cutting an incredible seven minutes off the process. The orchestra's atmospheric arrival is in fact worth waiting for (*Lohegrin* was just around the corner), and if Plasoun doesn't quite whip up the excitement Morris does here, his fleetness is ample compensation.

His rendering of the *Trauermusik* — an outdoor funeral march to accompany the transfer of Weber's remains to Dresden — is also speedy, almost jaunty, to the detriment of the work's character, especially as the dark colours of massed wind/brass and muffled drums fail to register properly.

Fine performances, though, of the *Siegfried Idyll*, *Faust Overture* and two further a cappella choruses.

OPERA John Higgins

■ KIRI TE KANAWA
Sole a amore, Puccini arias
Lyons Opera Orch/Nagano; Vignoles
Erato 0630 17071-2 *** £15.49
ERATO have made an effort to inject some variety into Dame Kiri's Puccini recital.

Sprinkled among the familiar arias are a couple of intermezzi, from *Manon Lescaut* and *Butterfly*, and three songs. The latter include *Sole a amore*, a very early piece which was later recycled as the quartet from the third act of *Bohème*.

Te Kanawa sings it most winningly, but it serves less well as a record title. *Sole* is in distinctly short supply as Manon and Mimì, Tosca and Liu pour out their woes. Te Kanawa ill-advisedly begins with Tosca, not her best role, and then lets the other operas follow in chronological order. Mimì is no longer really her part either, for all the confidentiality she puts into the poor girl's short narration of a short life. She is happier with the soaring line of Manon's two arias, with the grace of *Magda's Dream* (*La rondine*) and with a pretty flower piece from Puccini's first opera, *Le villi*. Perhaps best of all is *Butterfly's Un bel di*, sung from the heart — and the chest.

Kent Nagano's accompaniment is supportive, though on the soupy side. Roger Vignoles is the neat pianist for the songs.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
*** Worth buying

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

Peter Ackroyd on two books that assess the far-reaching influence of a writer who knew the importance of being talked about



Wilde and "Bosie", Lord Alfred Douglas: a fatal romance

An Oscar worth winning

I began, like so many fatal romances, in Paris. Oscar Wilde, still relatively young and with only a volume of his poems as a passport, travelled to that city in order to pay homage to the French masters of style. He always proclaimed his great debt to Mallarmé and the other Symbolists, for example, although he borrowed their mystery rather than their magnificence. One of this charmed circle was André Gide; he was a young man who, like most hedonists, possessed a strong sense of the spiritual. As a boy he slept on wooden boards with the New Testament for company; but the laurel wreath is sometimes more appealing than the crucifix, and Gide turned to verse.

It was in this guise that he first encountered Wilde but the scenes of the earliest meetings, as recounted by Jonathan Fryer, contain more comedy than poetry. Wilde "sidled up" to Gide and whispered to him, "Do you know why Christ did not love his mother? Because she was a virgin!" Immediately they arranged to have dinner, and were old friends by the time they sat down. At a slightly later date Wilde gazed at Gide's mouth. "I don't like your lips," he murmured. "They are straight like those of someone who has never lied. I want to teach you how to lie, so your lips become beautiful and twisted like those of an antique mask." It was enough to turn any young poet's

head, and Fryer suggests that Gide felt himself to have been "spiritually raped"; it is lucky he got off so lightly.

Like any pilgrim, Fryer treads over familiar if sacred ground; André and Oscar recount Wilde's history as well as the slightly less notorious career of Gide himself who, apparently, tried to convince himself of his own heterosexuality before being "taken" in the sand-dunes of North Africa by a local Arab. Thereafter he would "chance upon young goat-herds", with their charming little flutes, and "the lyricism of such scenes penetrated the marrow of his bones". This last phrase is characteristic of Fryer's somewhat overheated prose: it seems that anyone who writes about Wilde finds it necessary to enter a Turkish bath of style.

Gide is perhaps the one who suffers most in Fryer's account. He emerges as a mildly irritating and somewhat peevish creature, torn in so many different directions that it is surprising he managed to remain in one piece. That is why his friendship never survived Wilde's disgrace. He refused to speak in his defence after the trials and, having been elected as Mayor of the small Normandy commune of La Roque, was embarrassed to be seen with him in Paris. Anyone who puts a Normandy commune before a great artist can hardly be forgiven, but moments of time and fate are mysterious. Gide was eventually awarded the

Nobel Prize and settled down as a grand old man of European literature, even as Wilde himself was being dismissed as a pariah of no importance. Like many who know that they are guilty of bad faith, Gide alternately patronised and misrepresented Wilde in subsequent essays. But of course it was the true genius who triumphed in the end.

Fryer believes that Wilde in fact always "haunted" Gide, but as Philip Hoare points out in *Wilde's Last*

scenes and suggestions" which quite eclipsed public interest in the progress of the war. Maud Allen wished to dance Wilde's *Salome* in a somewhat suggestive manner but Pemberton Billing, MP and owner of a newspaper ominously entitled *The Vigilante*, accused her of pandering to "the cult of the clitoris". He was excused his use of the last word on the grounds that it was known only to the medical profession.

So a great libel case was brought. Legal proceedings of a salacious nature are the true popular entertainment of the British people and, much to everyone's delight, the details became more shocking by the hour. Pemberton Billing and his associates insisted that Maud Allen and Wilde's *Salome* were part of a larger conspiracy, organised by Germans, to destroy the moral fabric of the nation. It was a secret movement of intellectuals and aristocrats who were in turn the willing partners of prostitutes and homosexuals, actresses and politicians. The names of Asquith and Haldane were mentioned: "It was intimated that the judge of the case itself, Justice Darling, also appeared in a 'black book' of eminently corruptible officials."

The name of Wilde was on everyone's lips largely because some of his old associates and friends were involved in the course of the trial. Two of the blamed remnants of the Wilde circle, Alfred Douglas and

Robert Ross, haunted the court like those ghosts of dead beauty invoked by Pope. Of course they turned upon each other and Douglas pursued Ross's own possible appearance in the notorious "black book" with a venom worthy of his father.

Philip Hoare suggests that this revolt of the populist Pemberton Billing against the established authorities did indeed mark the end of 19th century culture; but with the quixotic mixture of actresses and politicians, editors and prostitutes, we might also be witnessing the end of 18th century society as well. It was the last stand of the liberal Whiggish tendency in English politics.

It is an interesting and intriguing tale, but of course it has no moral. It ended. In tears and the usual triumphalist pieties, according to the status of the respective parties, and then was quite forgotten. But, one element has survived. Jonathan Fryer registers the impression Wilde made upon his contemporaries, and Philip Hoare discusses the effect which he had upon posterity. He began as a sensation, came to maturity as a lesson in cultural history, and ended as one of the most important figures of the 19th century. At least, as he once remarked to a prison visitor, the English could no longer pretend that they had never heard of him.

ANDRE AND OSCAR

By Jonathan Fryer

Constable, £20

ISBN 0 09 48520 1

WILDE'S LAST STAND

By Philip Hoare

Duckworth, £16.95

ISBN 0 7156 2736 6

Stand, that was not necessarily a unique phenomenon. This book might almost be entitled *Wilde's last trial* because, at its centre, is the account of an extraordinary legal case at the end of the First World War when almost 50,000 English people were accused of being "ruled by the still extant culture of Oscar Wilde".

The names of Maud Allen and Noel Pemberton Billing are now quite forgotten, but their confrontation in the Old Bailey created what one newspaper called "extraordinary

The daily assembly at my boarding school in North India began each morning with a prayer and a song. Some of the most memorable lines from my teenage years come from Tagore's selection of poems, *Gitanjali*: "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high: Where knowledge is free: Where the world has not been broken up into narrow domestic walls..."

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit; Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action; Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

These lines were translated from the Bengali original by Tagore in collaboration with Yeats and Thomas Sturge Moore in 1912-13. They were also, along with Robert Frost's *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, the favourite lines of India's most famous Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Not surprisingly, Dutta and Robinson include them in their packed anthology, along with a selection of letters, a newly translated one-act play, two short memoirs of his childhood and boyhood, various essays, black and white photographs of Tagore and his much admired avant-garde paintings, a tiny extract from his novel, fragments of poems, epigrams and three out of the 2,500 songs that Tagore wrote and composed.

Vision that tried to see everything

Ardashir Vakil

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

An Anthology

Edited by Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson

Picador, £20

ISBN 0 330 34962 7

SELECTED LETTERS OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Edited by Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson

Cambridge University Press, £20

ISBN 0 521 59018 3

It is an ambitious compilation for a 400 page book. Sometimes the pieces are too short or too abridged to really convey the flavour of the work; the songs are rendered impersonally without their haunting, timeless tunes. Here, if ever, there is a good case for a CD to be pocketed in the back flap of this pricey anthology.

The most rewarding and revealing part of this book, for Western readers (for whom the editors confess, this book is mainly intended) is the

section that contains five of Tagore's best short stories. The first one, *The Conclusion*, is a masterpiece. Reading it, even on a grey and rainy London morning, brought tears to my eyes. Not tears of sadness or joy, but the tears one might shed listening to Bach or while watching a poignant moment from a Satyajit Ray film: man-made creations of such sublime simplicity and beauty that only nature could match.

"In the course of life one sees a great many faces, but only a few become fixed in the mind, not for their external appeal but for some other quality — a transparency perhaps. Most faces do not give away much of the personality; but the transparent face — the face in a thousand — clearly reveals the mystery behind it and immediately impresses itself on the mind. Mrinmayi's face was one of these. Her eyes held all the wilful femininity of a nimble, unfettered fawn. It was a face that, once seen, was not easy to forget."

Such sentiments are at the heart of everything, both good and bad, I have ever read,

heard or sung from the work of this great man and writer. Tagore's work is primarily concerned with innocence and clarity. He wants to be like the dying but happy boy in his drama *The Postmaster*, that begins this book. The child who is ordered to stay in bed by the village quack pleads with his father to allow him access to the window that looks out on to the "faraway hills", and all humanity that passes by. "I want to see everything — everything there is to see." Some lines later he says, "I don't know. I haven't read any books..." A telling reversal of Mallarmé's worldly-weary opening to *Brise marine*: "La chair est triste, hélas et j'ai lu tous les livres."

Tagore's work, the universality he founded at Santiniketan ("abode of peace"), his huge body of work, seek to "knock at the doors of the mind", not through books, explanations and exams, but through the "nourishment of the imagination" and the day to day perception of the small but beautiful mysteries of life: "I loved to stand and look... In the farthest recesses of a sky full of burning sunshine I would just be able to detect the thin shrill cry of a kite; and from the lane adjoining the Singhi's garden, past the houses dormant in noonday slumber, would float the sing-song of the bangle-seller — 'chal churi chal' — at such times my whole being would float away too."

No heart without soul

It's a sort of truism that successful novelists rarely make successful playwrights (Joyce, James, Bellow, et al), and on the evidence of this 84 page novella by playwright Simon Gray (*Cell Mates*, *The Common Pursuit*) the opposite is also the case. *Breaking Hearts* is a self-

absorbed farce which holds the reader to ransom — as his alcoholic protagonist Professor Helena Twisscombe is held to ransom by a perfidious student. After a clumsy changeover in narrator near the beginning, the text is all in the hands of this nameless female lagg.

Addressing herself to Twisscombe as "Twiskers" she boasts of her conquests, humiliating easy campus targets — the politically correct faculty, foreign students — who are never more than caricatures. The book culminates in the seduction of Helena's Australian niece Sissy who, naked, is tied up in chains when she should have been accompanying Helena to the opera. This seduction is the novel's acme: no less, but it remains curiously inert. And despite the bondage and the sado-masochism that accompanies it, un-

not to be confused with bit, which is a sandwich, Twiskers) — bit is always aware. Because bit is right in the centre of my brain."

And this from Helena: "But my students are on the whole too dim to notice even my coarsest physical characteristics — the wart underneath my nose, the thickness of my neck, my slightly soiled blouse (it soils itself the moment I put it on, however clean my hands), my dumping legs, my shoes that only look sensible, while actually gripping my swelling and throbbing feet."

The best comparison I can come up with for Simon Gray is Tom Sharpe. Except Sharpe is funny. Gray makes the mistake of presuming certain scenes are intrinsically comic, like one in which an American student is conned into believing that the dog who bit her is a known rabies carrier. Here, the prose is on the level of bar-room banter: "Oh, shit. Oh, shit. Oh, shit. Think of Minnie Mouse squeaking 'Oh, shit!' It was like that."

The critic Roland Barthes has said: "A text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" — with the reader. The novelist has not the same recourse as a playwright to actors and set designers to help sell the message. Fiction is not a team sport. Gray has neglected to do much of the work of a novelist and the result is a truncated half-book.

Russell Celyn Jones

BREAKING HEARTS

By Simon Gray

Faber, £5.99

ISBN 0 571 1728 5



Gray: flat farce

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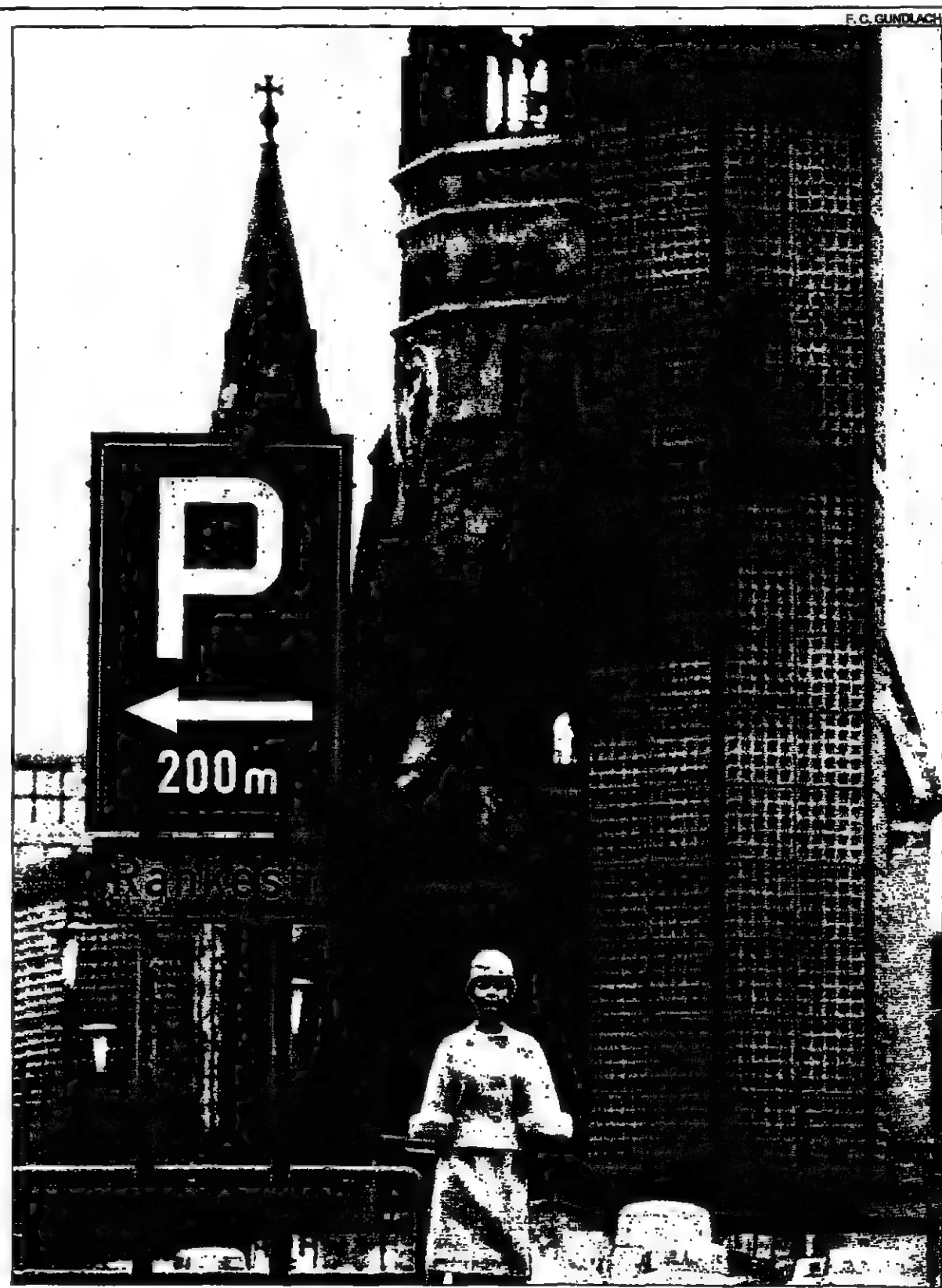
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Building the new on to the old: view of Berlin, 1963, from German Photography 1870-1970 (Yale, £40)

READING Giles MacDonogh's absorbing book about the new German capital, you might wonder why anyone ever bothered with Berlin at all. Situated in an inaccessible corner of north-east Europe, with minimal cultural traditions, no cuisine and centuries of dismal housing, Berlin seemed to become merely the plaything of those accused 18th- and 19th-century Frederick and Williams of Prussia (who generally preferred Potsdam anyway). Their ambitious conceptions eventually went to ruin, first under the Nazis — helped by the work of Allied bombers — then under the communists.

How to make a 500-page book out of that? MacDonogh manages admirably. He eschews the obvious chronological mode, and tackles this weirdly mutated city thematically: architecture, society, the arts, even food and drink (a particular interest of MacDonogh's). The chapter on Berlin's physical disposition is the longest: no city in Christendom — with the exception of Jerusalem — has undergone such massive construction and destruction, only to emerge against all logic with its identity renewed.

Tales from the city of change

James Woodall

BERLIN

By Giles MacDonogh

Sinclair-Stevenson, £25

ISBN 1 85189 525 2

This is key to understanding Berlin: its ill-mannered fight for survival. While there are prehistoric traces of settlement, the city proper didn't make its mark until the mid-13th century; it became the capital of Brandenburg in 1486. Frederick the Great brought real dynamism to the place in the 18th century, which is why 20 years after his death Napoleon so enjoyed defeating the Prussians — and plundering Berlin. Franco-German relations plummeted for a century and a half.

MacDonogh offers a wealth of detail on the feverish building which enlarged and transformed the city in the 19th century. However, MacDonogh's attention to architectural minutiae also slows the book down, leaving less space for portraying the Berlin most of us want to read about, the city of the inter-war Weimar Republic.

Indeed, the supreme irony of any such study of Berlin is that one of its key buildings, the Imperial Schloss, bearing vital traces of 500 years of the city's evolution, can only have a ghostly presence: symbolising as it did so much about the triumphalist Prussian past, the communists blew it up in 1950. MacDonogh's many descriptions of this architectural dinosaur read more like an enthusiast's praise for a forgotten Berlin than a valid act of reconstruction.

Nonetheless, MacDonogh is finally true to his own dictum: "Berlin is a self-destructive place," he says. "There has rarely been any sentiment about the past." This was no truer than in 1945, when most of what MacDonogh writes about had gone. Fifty years later, in a vast, leafy and variegated urban landscape, it is hard to imagine the gutted Hades left by two years of total war. MacDonogh's evocations of it are vivid and moving.

His book is a broad history of a city remarkably resistant to continuity, although MacDonogh could have taken off his donnish hat and relaxed a bit more. I missed a fuller account of the one part of Berlin — Prenzlauer Berg, a working-class district in the former East — which does take us back through the Wall, Hitler and Weimar to a more human zone than the one found on Alexanderplatz or in the concrete open spaces of the West.

Still, MacDonogh's historical expertise, notably over the appalling deeds of the Nazis in Berlin, results in this ever-changing city can hope for at yet another decisive moment in its troubled history.

Trouble in trying to score a century

Felipe Fernández-Armesto fears the perils of chronology

Histories of the 20th century are like buses: you will nearly a hundred years for one and then they all come along at once. To distinguish his, Martin Gilbert has devised two strategies. First, he has written at conspicuous length; his opening volume has 927 pages, while two others of equal corpulence are promised or threatened. Secondly, he has adopted a daringly antiquated method. Except for the additional chapters on the First World War, each chapter covers a single year from 1900 to 1933 inclusive. Sir Martin has chosen to be the analyst of his subject.

Annals suited ancient and primitive societies, where astrology commanded assent and where human life was thought to reflect the solar cycle. This was a largely unjustified assumption: 12 calendar months is a period almost devoid of historical significance. In the modern world, historians have gradually abandoned annual registers for less restrictive formats which enable the reader to follow an entire story. Or they prefer an analytical approach which exposes the relationships between events.

In abandoning these advantages, Sir Martin has made impressive gains. Like Confucius in the great chronicle of early Chinese history, the *Ch'un Ch'iu*, he gives moral stature to an apparently unadorned catalogue of episodes by piling up horrors and atrocities. Although only the First World War is recounted without interruption, a picture of the century does unfold, composed of high politics and pop culture. A coherent, if unremarkable, thesis underpins the work: the 20th is "the century of war", a "terrible century", of frustrated hopes, when liberalism and democ-

cracy have struggled to survive. A fluent style carries the reader through abrupt changes of scene. There are amusing juxtapositions. The chapter on 1929, for instance, opens with the "outlawing" of war and ends with the yo-yo, patented to the tune of *Happy Days Are Here Again*. In between come chillingly dead-pan paragraphs on the stock market crash.

These are qualities good enough to stone for many faults. The defects of Sir Martin's method, however, outweigh its merits. The uniformity of pace is soporific. The chapters are repetitive. The rhythm becomes predictable: relentless political *histoires événementielles*, grindingly long and detailed, are followed by perfunctory listings of such innovations as sliced bread, the World Series victory for the Boston Red Sox and the first performance of *The Wizard of Oz*. The effect at times is of a cross between Keats's *Contemporary Art* and *The Guinness Book of Records*.

Coherence is achieved by sacrificing coverage of the science and art which have transformed our relationship with the world and our way of perceiving it. Under 1905 there is no mention of the theory of relativity. Einstein appears only once in the book, in a subordinate clause, as a peace lobbyist in 1917. Freud emerges from neglect only to approve of Austria's war policy. There is no reference to world-shaking innovations in physics during the period.

Cubism is omitted from the chapter on 1907; indeed, most of the visual arts — which record and reshape our world-view — are treated with indifference throughout. The Futurist Manifesto makes no appearance in the chapter on 1909,

A HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
Volume 1: 1900-1933
By Martin Gilbert
HarperCollins, £30
ISBN 0 00 215867 1

1900



nor the Surrealist Manifesto in that on 1924, despite the power of these documents to influence political and social imaginations.

No literary movement is dealt with. Religion is virtually ignored. Except for Wittgenstein, who features as a combatant in the First World War, no philosophers appear. Yet that dim-witted diplomat, Sir Horace Rumbold, of whom Gilbert has written a biography, is repeatedly invoked as a witness of his times. It is impossible to understand or adequately to portray political and military events without the glutinous cultural context which sticks to them. Yet Gilbert says disproportionately little about changing values and habits, the growth of cities, the increase of populations, the demographic balance, the economic background of politics, agronomy, ecology or the effects of the revolution in communications.

Even the political coverage is too limited for its length. The impression of a "century of war" is the result of Gilbert's concentration on that theme. Equal selectivity in

another cause would create an equally partial effect. He fails to mention Mexico in the chapter on 1911, where British unrest gets twice as much space as Chinese Revolution. Readers learn little about countries of immense size and importance — nothing of Brazil, nothing of Argentina, except that an abortive communist uprising took place there in 1917.

Narcissism is one of modern western historiography's worst vices. Gilbert has given us another westerner's history, in which the rest features chiefly when it impinges on Europe and the United States. We do not get the "fair balance of regions" we are promised. Too much of the book is compiled from sources it resembles, like Cassell's *History of England* and newspapers of record. Gilbert selects what was "in the news". In consequence, the story is shorn of discoveries which might make it rare and paradoxes which might enliven it. For the "century of war" has also been the century of

pacifism. The frustrated hopes have coincided with unprecedented progress. Uncontainable change has left vast areas of the world mired in stagnancy. The century of ecology has been peculiarly destructive of nature. The century of youth has left us with a vast cohort of the elderly to care for. The century of democracy has been the century of dictators. The century of science and secularism has been that of revived faith. Our utopias have nourished moral malaise, suicide and crime.

Sir Martin could have developed these contrasts in pursuit of his declared aim "to explore" failed expectations of "inevitable progress towards perfection". As it is, they are driven between the lines of the political and military narrative by a method wasteful of space. The author's loyalty to the annals tradition is admirable but in this book he has taken it too far. With nearly 2,000 pages apparently still to come, we can hope that Gilbert will revise his plan and make the remaining volumes shorter, or more interesting, or both.

Ffion Jenkins on the call of the valleys

Just as Welsh as you feel

What are the defining characteristics of a nation? How does geographic distance and the use of a language effect one's sense of national identity? To be Welsh, does one have to be hospitable, musical, eloquent and enthusiastic? Perhaps it takes a foreigner to ask the question in the first place, as Pam Petro does in *Travels in an Old Tongue*. She is aptly named, for "pam" means "why" in Welsh and "why" is a question that dominates this account of a world tour searching for, and conversing haltingly with, Welsh speakers in far flung destinations. Why do the Welsh persist in speaking the language? Why would an American want to learn

connection through family ties or acquaintances. And there usually is one. Pamela Petro applies a global dimension to the task, searching for a way through the language barrier to connect with Welsh speakers who, like herself, are in self-imposed exile. Not an easy task, given her very imperfect understanding of the language.

One expat in Oslo calls his Welsh society "the ones who left" and *Travels in an Old Tongue* is an account of Wales and the Welsh language through the eyes of those who have left. Her observations do not always ring true, but nonetheless paint a fascinating portrait of a country, its language and people, viewed from the outside. Ms Petro's journey across continents is imbued with an awareness of the bizarre nature of her quest, and her successes and failures are recounted with self-deprecating humour and honesty. Occasionally self-indulgent, the account is nevertheless compelling reading as cultures and prejudices clash all over the world.

Not surprisingly, Ms Petro raises more issues than she answers. She explores the link between language and identity without offering a firm conclusion, at times suggesting that Welshness and the Welsh language are inextricably linked, at others implying simply that you are as Welsh as you feel. She also raises historical controversies about the English domination of Wales with a convert's zeal, aware of the fact that to become a *dygwyr* (learner) of Welsh is to take a political stance, though she confesses that she does not know quite what that means for an American.

Definitions of Welshness and of nationhood have been attempted many times before, but this particular attempt is suffused with a love of the Welsh language that is infectious and, regrettably, probably incomprehensible to most of its readers.

TRAVELS IN AN OLD TONGUE
Touring the World Speaking Welsh
By Pamela Petro
HarperCollins, £18
ISBN 0 00 255056 1

Heavenly creatures

THE HEADY New York art world of the late 1980s — with its glamorous parties, postmodern double speak and spiralling prices — is a subject ripe for satire. In this, her third novel, Fernanda Eberstadt rises to the occasion with typically dazzling verbal virtuosity and wit with an insider's unflinching eye and with, most importantly, a fierce resistance to cartoonish reduction. *When the Sons of Heaven Meet the Daughters of the Earth* is frequently hilarious, but it is also a considered explanation of the interweaving of art, commerce and affection, an acute account of its characters' quests for transcendence in an often fatuous world.

As the novel's core is Isaac Hooker, the eccentric and ebullient protagonist of Eberstadt's last book, *Isaac and His Devils*, a brilliant, lumbering myope from rural New Hampshire, a Harvard dropout and an abrasive iconoclast, Isaac has arrived in the big city to seek his fortune. After sleeping rough and scraping by for months, he discovers the glory of art in a class for the homeless: "Now, drawing pictures was all Isaac wanted to do. The energy he'd once unleashed upon politics, history, science and poetry — even friendship — was now funnelled solitarily into this one silent thing.

Claire Messud

WHEN THE SONS OF HEAVEN MEET THE DAUGHTERS OF THE EARTH

By Fernanda Eberstadt
Harvill, £15.99
ISBN 1 85046 401 7

Pictures seemed safer than words. He paints ludicrously unfashionable pictures: New Hampshire scenes with religious themes; and ekes a living as an assistant to a fashionable SoHo framer.

Fate, with a little help from Isaac's flashy roommate Casey Hanrahan, leads him to the Gebbers, Alfred and Dolly, artistic philanthropists whose life's work is the Aurora Foundation. "The premise of Aurora was simple: to choose a few men and women of genius and bank them for life." They are an unlikely pair: Alfred, Jewish and from Brooklyn, is something of a roué; Dolly is prim and fastidious. Only in their commitment to art — and in their children — are they conjoined.

The Gebbers' fortune is Dolly's ("The aspirin queen, her husband called her") and their taste is minimalist, avant-garde. Eberstadt

creates memorable comic scenes of the Gebbers in their glamorous world of guarded and tasteful opinion; and among them she casts Isaac, "an oversized Fragonard, all pink and gold", whose impatience with decorum is matched by the force of his own ideas.

What ensues is inevitable and poignant. Initially Alfred's "discovery" Isaac is whisked, by Dolly, into the maelstrom of the downtown art scene. The relationship between this bristly *grande dame* and her peculiar young protégé is impeccably drawn, and their companions look on, bemused, as both are irrevocably altered by it.

The novel's other central character is the city of New York, which vibrates in all its seasons through Eberstadt's pyrotechnic prose, just as the textures of rural New England emerged so vividly in *Isaac and His Devils*. *When the Sons of Heaven Meet the Daughters of the Earth* is a more tightly plotted, less intellectually sprawling novel than its predecessor, but the two books should be read together; not only do they reveal Isaac to be one of the most intriguing protagonists of recent times, they also show the breadth of Eberstadt's literary range, her formidable capacity to bring life, in all its facets, most fully to the page.



Fernanda Eberstadt: vivid colour and texture in her prose

Courage and mastery

Robert Nye

IN DESOLATE HEAVEN

By Robert Nye
Duckworth, £14.99
ISBN 0 7156 2833 X

the enigmatic Captain Jameson, an English officer who comes and goes at the hotel. Elizabeth gets to know them — Elizabeth, Captain Hunter, especially Jameson has a with whom Jameson has a particular affinity. Hunter is awaiting court martial. His offence was to protest when his superiors plotted to sacrifice his men in the tunnels which they had mined under enemy lines.

All the war action is reported to Elizabeth by the surviving



Edric the poetry of war

ing soldiers. Thus the novelist is never felt to be pretending to be present at scenes of unimaginable carnage. There is a salutary sense of men not wanting to tell of the things

that they know that they can do. Elizabeth's effort to understand this matches the reader and becomes it.

At the book's heart there is a deep darkness in which sex and death are intermingled. It is not just the darkness of the mines where hunter's men were killed. It transpires that Jameson has become a dealer in pornography. An abyss of erotic excitement lies beneath all that Elizabeth feels. At an understated climax she is aroused against her will by having her photograph taken. It is an innocent formal portrait, but in obeying every instruction of the photographer as to how she should pose, she abandons herself to him, knowing the man takes pictures for Jameson.

In *Desolate Heaven* is like one of those dreams where you can come awake, then fall asleep and continue where you left off: it has that kind of coherence and necessity. Apart from its poetic power, it demonstrates the truth of Plato's perception that only the dead ever see the end of a war.

A world built from fragments

Sylvia Brownrigg

SOLOMON'S SEAL
By Molly McCloskey
Phoenix House, £14.99
ISBN 1 8659 022 9

THE SECOND PENGUIN BOOK OF WOMEN'S SHORT STORIES
Edited by Susan Hill
Michael Joseph, £10.99
ISBN 1 86159 022 9

has become a cold place to be.

Through a few pieces stand out — *Solomon's Seal*, a subdued tale of a kind of incest, and *Love's account* of a couple surviving the accidental death of their infant boy — the stories build their memorable world cumulatively, piece by piece.

In the *Second Penguin Book of Women's Short Stories* each story must build and contain

its own effect. The stories here stunningly live up to that brief. They cross an impressive span of geographies and histories; and, intriguingly, often feature male protagonists — whether in Naomi Mitchinson's dreamy account of boy hostages kept by Roman soldiers or Andrea Barrett's sparkling, masterful story of Carl Linnaeus' dying days. Throughout, these writers succeed in flushing full lives from the pages, as E. Annie Prout's dogged old hunter flushes grouse from the damp woods in *An Unclouded Day*. There is the wonderful delicacy of Anita Desai's tutor in *Private Tuition* by Mr. Bose, intoning Sanskrit verses on the balcony to a sulky teenager while his wife makes *pures* indoors.

Happily, Hill has also chosen to include lesser-known writers in this volume, which allows for some pleasant discoveries, including Julia Dar-

ling's tart humour in *The Street* and the just-contained madness of Catherine Merriman's *The Experiment*. Hill has previously put together two excellent anthologies for Penguin, each providing the reader a sample from many of the finest practitioners of the medium. It is a fine, unsung art, the art of anthologising, and Susan Hill once again proves she is a master of it.

Sylvia Brownrigg's short story collection, *Ten Women Who Shook the World*, is published by Gollancz, priced £12.99.

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Annie Turner says most people would still rather chat than face fax. But double-glazing salesman have discovered a window of opportunity

The future? It's all in our hands

Mobile phones are part of everyday life for many Britons. More than seven million subscribe to cellular services, even though the first services were launched here only in 1985.

CIT Research predicts the number of UK subscribers will hit almost 16 million by 2006. But most network traffic still comprises phone conversations, rather than data and fax transmissions.

This is despite the fact that the technology on which all four UK digital networks is based, Global System for Mobile (GSM) and its derivative, Personal Communication Network (PCN) was designed originally as a European standard with data transmission capacity as an integral part. The networks are run by Orange, Mercury One2One, Vodafone and Cellnet. The business community was expected to pioneer the alternative use of mobile phones, followed by consumers, as the availability of services grew and their prices fell.

Alternative functions include using mobile phones to download e-mail while travelling, or to find the closest French restaurant by browsing a World Wide Web-based information service. The idea would be to use the phone as a

wireless modem by inserting a data card, then linking it to the subscriber's portable computer. To send or receive short, text-only messages, the phone can be used on its own, its screen acting like a pager.

Richard Jarvis — managing director of Vodata, the Vodafone division responsible for providing all services beyond basic voice telephony on the operator's network — says: "It's not that mobile data doesn't work, it's just that there is a lack of applications. Notions that 50 per cent of traffic would be non-voice by

specified in GSM], and you are paying four to five times the price for the call. It isn't practical for browsing. And 60 per cent of business people who talk about the Internet actually just want e-mail."

There are signs of progress, however. Mr Jarvis says that the short-message facility, integral to GSM phones, is "bigger than data and growing far faster, although this is hard to quantify. The great thing about messages is that you can pick them up when it suits you without having the phone ring at an inconvenient moment". He finds share prices a particularly popular short-message service.

Ken Blakeslee, chairman of the UK's Mobile Data Association, has global responsibility for developing mobile applications with manufacturer Nortel. He thinks the use of short messages will take off once handset design improves: "At the moment, typing a message using the shift key and a phone key pad is a nightmare."

Several larger-screen phones are due out soon, and next year Nortel will launch a handset whose whole side is a touch-sensitive screen. Users can choose which keypad layout they want from a simple menu, so that if they want, say, a calculator, a number pad will appear on screen. To send

'Some 60 per cent of business people who talk about the Net actually just want e-mail'

2000 is an absolute joke. I'd be amazed if non-voice traffic accounted for as many as 2 per cent of calls at the moment, although it might reach 5 per cent by the end of the century."

He adds: "There has been too much hype. Add Internet to the mobile data marketing mix and it sounds like a winner, but it's a mismatch. Modern modems on a fixed telephone line can run at speeds between 20kbit and 30kbit per second, whereas using a mobile phone to make a connection, you get a third of that speed at best [9.6kbit is



A double-glazing salesman shows customers on screen how their house could look

a message, a standard keyboard will come up, and so on.

Geoff Ellis, project manager, telecommunications, at Price Waterhouse, supports 7,000 mobile workers who access central databases, send e-mail and so on from wherever they are working, be it the UK, the Continent or anywhere else with a GSM network. "Transmission speed might only be 9.6kbit per second, but at least it is virtually guaranteed and

quicker than struggling for an hour to get a connection."

He adds that using a mobile phone "is cheaper than using a hotel phone line and a modem in at least ten European countries". On the downside, he thinks that, for now, mobile data will remain the province of large companies with big IT resources because research about which equipment really works with which software and so on is more complex than it should be.

Nortel's Mr Blakeslee agrees: "Lots of the fundamentals are in place, but things are just not flowing yet. They will soon, because business will demand it. Businesses are moving more and more towards reliance on intranets, and employees will need access to core information provided via intranets wherever they are. This is being compounded by more people being out of the office for longer periods of time."

On a screen near you

Road warriors is the hi-tech term coined for those who have discovered that the longer they stay out of the office, the more work they can get done. Far from gossiping colleagues and safe from the clutches of the company coffee machine, this nomadic clan is reaping the benefits of mobile technology.

Among those benefiting from the latest innovations in hand-held technology are double-glazing salesmen. Handicapped for years by their reputation for spending hours with customers before producing a final quote, salesmen have seen their way of working improve dramatically.

Newly kitted out with a laptop and a printer, this updated breed can show you on screen exactly what your house would look like with different window designs.

A pilot scheme at Caradon Everest has proved so successful that by the end of this year, 100 members of the sales force will be sent out armed with a laptop and printer. Using Shiva's LanRover remote access servers and software developed by Miller Management, the software and information technology consultancy, all the information from the salesman's laptop goes straight back to Everest head office, and the salesman can pick up new inquiries at the same time.

According to Bob Southward, IT manager at Everest: "There was a great deal of cynicism among the salesmen that the guys in IT could

contribute to sales, but it has worked. There has been a significant reduction in the number of cancellations, and the increase in sales has been substantial. It gives the salesmen much more credibility with the customers."

Via their laptops, Everest salesmen, who spend an average of two hours with each customer, have access to a vast picture library. Whether the customers live in a Georgian or a Victorian house and want leaded or non-leaded windows, they will be able to see at a glance exactly what they are buying. Used as a pricing tool, the computers enable salesmen to close a deal on site.

The ordering process has also been speeded up so that customers receive a printout of the contract at the end of a consultation. For posterity's sake, the old TV advertisements featuring Ted Moulton have been captured on the mobile multi-media equipment.

Colin Peto, divisional sales manager at Everest, was one of the first to use the hi-tech equipment in the field. "It gives the salesman an expanded brain," he says. "Pricing windows is not as simple as people think. There are so many different designs and options that it's hard for salesmen to remember them."

"The beauty of the technology is that the customer regards it as a reliable source of information."

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TODAY'S notebook computers can do almost everything a desktop machine can, in a format smaller and lighter than a phone book.

Don't look on them as portable computers, however. Short battery life makes access to a power supply essential, and colour screens are washed out in bright sun, so working out on the patio is not an option. But executives and engineers who travel to offices, factories or construction sites find the ability to take their own computer — set up the way they like it and carrying the software they need — is invaluable.

The downside is that a sales team assembling at the airport looks like a Victorian expedition to Africa, laden with bags of every conceivable shape and size. Those who need portable computer

NOTEBOOK COMPUTERS

power to gather information rather than disseminate it, travel much lighter.

Some estate agents, for example, tote notebook computers to houses they are surveying. A laser-based "digital tape measure" records the room dimensions, and the pictures are taken with a digital camera. Type in the blurb ("stone's

throw from station, extensive but manageable gardens") and the whole brochure could, in theory, be complete and approved by the clients in one visit. Maintenance engineers are increasingly taking notebook computers with built-in CD-ROM players on site visits, with data that would otherwise occupy a multi-volume manual, and

have the benefit of computer-assisted diagnosis.

Reuters, the news network, issues notebook computers to sales staff, managers, journalists and corporate trainers. Journalists use Ascenda notebooks from AST Computer to write stories and file them, using GSM digital mobile phones.

Many observers believe it

is only a matter of time before notebook computers take over from desktop models entirely. When screen technology gives notebooks the same sort of brightness and contrast as cathode-ray tube monitors, many an executive will prefer a computer that can be folded up and put out of the way. Then the domination of the notebook computer will be complete.

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GRECIAN Splendour Cruises departing on Monday for a week aboard the *Costa Classica* are available from £520 from Page & Moy including connecting flights. Details: 0116-250 7722.

KOS for £399 a person for a fortnight's self-catering holiday with a flight from Manchester on Wednesday is on offer from Co-op Travelcare. Details: 0541 500385.

MALTA for a fortnight's self-catering holiday with a flight from Stansted on July 31 will cost £266 a person from Advantage Travel Centres. Details: 0900 881883.

GRAN DORADA's holiday village at Heilbachsee is available for breaks coinciding with the Rhine in Flames Festival on August 9. Three nights for two adults and two children, including ferries and self-catering, costs from £350. Details: 01242 250000.

HORSERIDING, with a guide, in the Corbières hills of southern France from one farmhouse to another is avail-

able from Intravel for a week from August 10, including a flight from Gatwick. Price: £363 a person, with half-board. Details: 01653 628862.

BANGKOK for five nights for £439 a person with a non-stop flight from Heathrow is on offer from Qantas Holidays from August 10. Add a week in Phuket for an extra £180. Details: 0990 673464.

TUSCANY or Umbria for £299 a person for a week's self-catering with flights from Gatwick on August 23 and 30 is available from Impulse Holidays. Price based on two sharing and includes car hire. Details: 0181-741 9007.

BUNKHOUSE accommodation for three nights in a converted stable and loft in Langwathby in Cumbria, plus full breakfast, is available from £39 a person. Details: 01768 881881.

JAMAICA for a fortnight from £349 a person with room-only accommodation and a flight from Newcastle on August 14 is on offer from Going Places. Details: 01483 771144.

FERRIES

SWANSEA Cork Ferries has introduced a special midweek fare. The £298 return, for a car and five adults, is available until August 18 on any day except Friday or Saturday. Details: 01792 456110.

P&O FERRIES has new three-day return tickets available on routes from Dover to Calais and from Portsmouth to Le Havre and Cherbourg. A return costs £94 (with a free bottle of wine) for a car and two passengers. Valid until September 12 for travel by September 14. Details: 0990 980980.

IRISH FERRIES is selling £119 one-way Pembroke-Rosslare tickets for a car and five adults until August 31. The fare is for midweek crossings at night. Fares rise to £159 at weekends. Details: 0990 171717.

THE lowest offer on Dover-Calais available for this summer closes on Saturday. Sea France has returns from £49, rising to £95 at peak periods for a car and up to nine passengers. Book by Saturday for travel by August 30. Details: 0990 717171.



KIRKER HOLIDAYS is offering a £150 saving to Times readers who want to visit the Hacienda de San Rafael in Andalucia next month. The new price of £652 a person includes return flights from Heathrow, accommodation and all meals for five days, plus car hire and sherry-tasting in Jerez. Details: 0171-231 3333.

FLIGHTS

LOWER transatlantic fares have been announced for next September. The Travel Bug has British Airways return flights to New York from Manchester, London and Birmingham for £219. Flights to Los Angeles and San Francisco (from London only) are available for £345. Details: 0990 73747.

BUSINESS-CLASS passengers flying to New York from Gatwick, Manchester or Birmingham with Continental can take a companion for £99 return. Details: 01293 776464.

TRAILFINDERS has a £374 return fare to Bangkok, flying with Olympic via Athens. Details: 0171-938 3939.

VIRGIN Atlantic flights to Johannesburg cost £412 return, including tax, if purchased by Friday. Travel before September 30. Details from Air Tickets Direct: 0990 320321.

EXTRA weekend flights between Gatwick and Lisbon have been added by AB Airlines. Excursion fares start at £114. Details: 0345 464748.

HOTELS

DISCOUNTS of 30 per cent of normal rates are available at the Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane until September 1. Rooms start at £188 a night. Details: 0171-499 6363.

HILTON HOTELS in the UK has a three-nights-for-two offer for guests on a Hilton Weekend Break until October 1. The offer also includes deals on dining within the hotel. Please quote reference FY. Details: 0800-8568000.

USE of the rooftop swimming pool is included in the summer rate at the Berkeley Hotel in Knightsbridge of £110 a person a night, based on double occupancy. Details: 0171-235 6000.

THE Hotel Londre Palace in Venice has a special rate, of about £174 a night until the end of August. The offer (minimum three nights), through Prima Hotels, includes a canal boat pass and 20 per cent off meals in the hotel. Details: 0800 181535.

THE Gleneagles golfing hotel has accommodation available for certain dates in

August at £205 a night, a savings of £45 on normal rates. Details: 0800-704705.

THE stylish Halkin Hotel just off Belgrave Square in London has a reduction to £240 a room for one night, including English breakfast. The offer, based on a minimum stay of two nights, is available until the end of August. Details: 0171-333 1000.

MIDDLETHORPE Hall in York has a special rate of £80 a person for one night, including breakfast and dinner in the hotel's restaurant, which was recently awarded three rosettes by the AA. Offer available until August 17. Details: 01904 641241.

THE Goring Hotel in central London and the 900-year-old Amberley Castle in West Sussex have put together a Town and Country package offering savings of 15 per cent on normal rates. The offer covers a minimum of two weekend nights at Amberley Castle and two weekend nights at the Goring. Details: 01798-831992 (Amberley) or 0171-396 9000 (Goring).

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Long air delays likely this summer

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

HOLIDAYMAKERS returning from Scandinavia, the Low Countries and the east Mediterranean face long delays this summer, because a vital air corridor over southern England has reached saturation point.

A sudden increase in the number of airlines now flying into regional airports such as Stansted, Norwich, Luton and London City, and a surge in the number of flights to Amsterdam, Brussels and cities throughout Eastern Europe took the Civil Aviation Authority by surprise and overwhelmed controllers guiding flights over Essex.

As a result, the four controllers and one supervisor at the West Drayton Air-Traffic Control Centre, who normally staff the radars covering the Clacton area, have to instruct pilots to "stack" at Lambourne near Romford in Essex, until they can be channelled towards their final destination.

The main air routes from the East and North East are funnelled towards Clacton, which is one of about half a dozen air "doorways" leading to the key airports in London.

Later in the summer, the CAA plans to split the sector in two, enabling some jets to be sent through new air corridors towards Stansted and Luton while others continue to fly the existing routes towards Gatwick and Heathrow.

The problems at Clacton — which some controllers have described as being similar to traffic jams on the London approach side of the M40 — are in danger of spoiling the CAA's record for reducing delays while handling more flights.

In the peak summer period from July to September last year, the average delay to all flights handled by the London Air-Traffic Control Centre was one and a quarter minutes. But at least 12 per cent of flights are delayed by half an hour or more.

Many delays are, however, caused by a range of problems, including bad weather, industrial action, security hold-ups and passengers going missing after their bags have been loaded.

Britain sails into a windfall

Seafaring events from Tall Ships Races to Cowes Week are boosting tourism, reports Ronald Gribble

SAILING is bringing a multi-million pound windfall to Britain's tourist industry. As the first leg of the 25th Cutty Sark Tall Ships' Races finished in Norway yesterday, Aberdeen, where the races began last week, was predicting a profit of £12 million after the ships attracted an estimated 650,000 people to the city.

The races are one of three big sailing events this year to benefit British tourism. Crowds drawn by the current UK tour of the £8 million replica of Captain Cook's Endeavour are also boosting seaside economies around the coast. At Whitby in North Yorkshire, Endeavour attracted one million visitors and earned the town £6 million.

On Tuesday thousands will descend on the Isle of Wight for Cowes Week, bringing a spending boom to the island.

The Tall Ships' Races, organised by the International Sail Training Association and sponsored by Cutty Sark Scotch Whisky, have attracted 120 ships from 15 countries from as far as the Baltic, involving 5,000 crew members.

Festival events during the ships' four-day stay in Aberdeen included an open-air concert with the Halls Orchestra composed by Terry Wogan, a carnival parade which featured 200 Shetlanders dressed as Vikings, fireworks and displays by the Army, Marines and the RAF.

As the ships set off across the bay in a parade of sail on the last day, they were saluted by a spray of Red Arrows.

John Ling, operations manager for the start of the race, said: "Accommodation in Aberdeen was completely full on the night of the race. Businesses involving tourism, travel and catering have seen a huge increase in their turnover. We feel confident that the total increase in trade in the north east of Scotland will not be less than £10 million and will probably reach £12 million."

This is a twelvefold increase on the £1 million Aberdeen made in 1991 when it last hosted the races.

En route to the start of the races, the Aberdeen-built schooner Malcolm Miller dropped anchor at Inverberrie

to witness the unveiling of a £65,000 memorial at the hometown of Scotland's Hercules Linton, who designed the tea clipper Cutty Sark, now on display at Greenwich. The ship, which set speed records in bringing tea from China, gave its name to the whisky that sponsors the races.

The Tall Ships event brings together young people from around the world to race in friendly competition in sailing ships which range from nearly new vessels to some more than 100 years old, and differ in size from 30ft to 400ft in length.

The organisers encourage crews to change ships at ports, so if you are a Norwegian or a Swede you may find yourself on a Scottish or Russian ship for the next leg of the voyage.

Besides the glory of being first to cross the finishing line at each stage of the races, the most coveted prize is the Cutty Sark Trophy — a solid silver model of the Cutty Sark — which is awarded to the ship's crew which has contributed most to international understanding and friendship.

The Tall Ships' arrival in Trondheim, just 150 miles short of the Arctic Circle and the furthest north the fleet has ever ventured, coincides with Norway's third largest city celebrating its one thousand years of existence.

On Saturday the fleet will cruise by the light of the midnight sun to Stavanger — the centre of Norway's oil industry — and then race the final leg to Gothenburg in Sweden, arriving by August 13 and staying for three days.

● On Saturday, having visited Scotland and the north of England, Endeavour arrives in Wales and will be on exhibition at Fishguard until August 3. After that she heads south for Falmouth (August 9-17), Plymouth (August 23-31), Weymouth (September 6-9), Brighton (September 13-21), St Helier, Jersey (September 27-October 5), Endeavour then leaves for St Malo (October 7-12) before returning to Boston, Lincolnshire (October 17-19) and then Whitby (October 21-26) for maintenance. She then goes to Hull (December 24-January 4) before her voyage to the United States.



Tall Ships' Races competitor Malcolm Miller seen from the deck of the Endeavour



Taxation is a greedy business

Airports fill beaches with bodies and millions who have saved for months finally relax on their summer holidays. It may seem churlish to point out the dark clouds on the horizon.

But the fact is that the taxation genie is now out of the bottle. And the damage being wreaked already by this creature of international politicians is about to become serious indeed.

From November 1, for example, Britain's air passenger duty will double to £10 on domestic and European flights and £20 on long-haul flights. The deci-

of bogus reasons for doing so. Domestic air services in Norway, for example, are subject to up to 25 per cent tax on journeys where the railway is a competitor.

Russia is raising £140 million a year from European airlines by charging them £62 a passenger to fly through its airspace. In less than three years, Jakarta put its passenger charges up by 127 per cent. Beijing by 126 per cent and Montreal by 110 per cent.

Overall, says the World Travel and Tourism Council, 73 per cent of the world's leading cities have increased their taxes. 13.5 have remained unchanged and a further 13.5 have reduced them.

Greece discovered the hard way what damage these taxes can cause. Within months of a decision to introduce departure tax of about £16 a head, its tourism industry had almost collapsed. Investment in new hotels came to a standstill and necessary refurbishments did not take place.

Yet the demand for holiday travel is still growing. Almost 16 million flights and holidays are covered by the CAA's Air Travel Organisers' Licences this summer. Every passenger is paying, on average, £36, 15 per cent more than last year.

So will anyone really notice the odd £5, £10 or even £20 a head? Not if you are a wealthy traveller or a business executive with an expenses-paid fully flexible ticket — but certainly if you are one of the majority of holidaymakers who have to budget carefully.

Enjoy this year's strong pound and cheap holidays while you can. At least the sunshine is tax free.

The airport tax genie is now out of the bottle

Russian coup for UK operator

By HARVEY ELLIOTT



Tsar Nicholas in captivity with his daughters in 1917

A SMALL British tour operator has obtained exclusive access to the Russian state archives, containing thousands of rarely seen documents and historic items. The collection, until now closed to the public, includes the personal diaries of Tsar Nicholas and his wife, Alexandra. The diaries are in English and reveal in graphic detail the development of the Russian revolution.

The archives also contain photograph albums and correspondence from the Tsar, George V, the Kaiser and Queen Victoria, as well as a collection of Hitler's personal effects and comprehensive documents about the fall of the Reich.

Nick Laing, managing director of the Whitby tour operator Steppes East which specialises in tailor-made visits to Russia and other former Eastern bloc countries, said yesterday: "We were contacted out of the blue by a South

African who had obtained a contract with the director of the archive to allow people into the building to see the collection.

"It is astonishing. Only six people at a time are allowed in and they sit around the director's table while some of the most astonishing items are brought to them. You have to pinch yourself that you are not dreaming when you hold photograph albums and letters or personal items of clothing and jewellery which, under the Communists, were considered far too important to be seen by the public.

"We are the only tour operator in the Western world with the authority to take visitors to see the collection."

● A tailored itinerary, including British Airways flights and transfers, three nights' B&B at the five-star Kempinski Hotel, a half-day sightseeing and entry to the archives with a translator costs from £1,485 a person booked through Steppes East.

Tourism to France soars despite 'rude' reputation

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

THE British holidaymaker's roller-coaster love affair with France is on again this summer, fanned into life by the ten-franc pound.

Despite being told this week that they were regarded by the rest of the world as "chronically rude, aggressive, dirty, idle and disorganised", the French are preparing for record numbers of tourists.

The Paris Chamber of Commerce interviewed 800 visitors from 16 countries and had hoped to use their comments in a promotional campaign. Instead they were stunned by the strong language used by visitors who universally described the French as rude and arrogant.

Nonetheless, France is the world's favourite tourist destination and more than 63 million foreign visitors — including ten million from Britain — will stay there this year. For British tour operators

the increase in bookings is turning into a bonanza. John Harding, of TravelScene, said: "It doesn't take the British long to decide to go back to France once the conditions are right. Now that Le Shuttle and Eurostar are running smoothly, it is being recognised that it is easy to pop over to Boulogne or Paris for lunch."

Mike Bruce-Mitford, of VFB Holidays, said that he had "never experienced a more positive climate for large bookings".

The Caravan Club said that interest was "unprecedented". Britany Ferries reported a 71 per cent increase in gite bookings. Lunan Poly said that French citybreaks were up 45 per cent; Cresta had a 60 per cent increase in self-drive holidays; Eurostays say this year families are splitting their time between beach and country, and Kierker Holidays says bookings to Paris have gone up by 157 per cent in the past month.

Tuscany, long a favourite destination for British tourists, is also proving irresistible this summer as the pound strengthens against the lira. Christopher Warner writes:

From the moment of boarding the bus from Florence airport to the city centre (£2.20), it is tempting to say "that's very reasonable". A meal for two, with two courses, two carafes of house wine, came to under £15, a strong encouragement not only to return, but (on a self-catering holiday) to eat out more often. Not many places can match it for value, but value for money is there for all to see throughout the whole range of restaurants.

The same applies at the supermarket, where drinkable wine is available from £1.50 a bottle. Campari (£4.30) and food bills compare favourably with Sainsbury's. Petrol is an exception to the general rule of bargain prices, but it is not much dearer than in Britain.

Why home is sweeter

A NEW study says that international travelling executives find life away from home damaging to their health and marriage.

Many of the 500 people polled by the Hyatt Hotel group say they resent business travel. These "world wearies", as Hyatt describes them, complain of problems with ulcers, overeating and alcohol abuse. Executives say they have missed important events in their children's lives, anniversaries and birthdays.

Hyatt identified another group — the "torn travellers" — who experience similar problems, but secretly enjoy their lives as "road warriors". They viewed travel as a chance to escape the office. But they also tended to be younger and less senior than more world-weary business travellers.

Executive married women are less likely to rely on their husbands to look after the home while away. Usually another family member, friend, or hired help is asked to keep an eye on things.

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

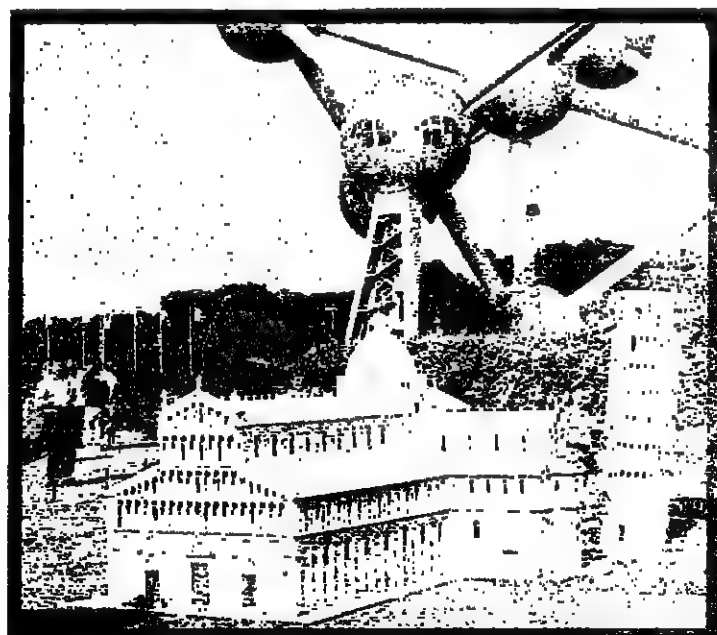
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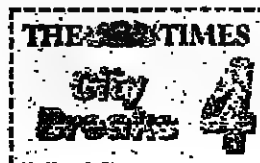


Today The Times offers you a two-night city break in Brussels from as little as £59 per person. This special getaway package includes return Channel crossing by P&O ferry or Le Shuttle, based on four people sharing one car, for two nights bed and breakfast accommodation in a three-star hotel. The price for a car and two passengers is £72 per person. Extra nights will cost from £22 per person. The offer is valid from Aug 1 to September 30, 1997 (except Aug 22-25 incl). For stays in September, Fri-Sun only, there is a supplement of £10 per person per night. (Mid-week stays are not available in September.)

You can also travel by Eurostar in August and pay £99 per person. For stays in September Fri-Sun, there would be a supplement of £18 per person per night.

All you need to do is collect four differently numbered tokens from The Times and telephone the booking line above to make your reservation. Tickets will be issued on receipt of your tokens and booking reference number. All bookings must be made by August 15.

The offer is subject to availability and the standard terms and conditions of Belgian Travel Service Ltd. This offer is not valid in conjunction with any other offer. It excludes midweek stays. Mon-Thurs, in Brussels in September. One child aged 2-11 years sharing parents' room receives 33% discount. No family rooms are available. Single room supplement is £28 per person per night. Extra nights cost £22 in Aug, £32 per person in Sept Fri-Sun.



SEE TOMORROW'S TIMES FOR ALL OUR CITY BREAKS OFFERS

CHANGING TIMES

[illegible]

CRICKET

McCague seizes initiative with decisive flourish

BY MICHAEL HENDERSON

LORD'S (first day of four; Middlesex won toss; Middlesex, with one first-innings wicket in hand, are 105 runs behind Kent)

AFTER an interesting day's play, ultimately dominated by Martin McCague, Kent claimed a clear advantage in the final session. Middlesex were blown along by a helpful breeze in the morning, but after tea, when McCague bowled with searing pace and finished the day with six for 49 off 15 overs, Kent sensed a wicket with every ball. He, alone, has managed to shape the game.

Batting is not an impossible task. The pitch is short of real pace, although it is sufficiently lively to help the new ball to go

through at a decent height, as McCague displayed when he nearly took Shah's nose off. Kent should have done a lot better than make 208 and Middlesex did not distinguish themselves in the last session, when they lost nine wickets. Only Gatting looked at all comfortable, but, like five of his team-mates, his defiance was undone by McCague for 41 when Middlesex had barely reached a hundred.

After slightly less than an hour's play, Kent were 24 for four when Walker, who was superbly caught by Brown as he dived low to his left, obliged Fraser with a third wicket in ten balls. Take away the 63 that Wells made and the forties of Fleming and Marsh, and there was little to commend.

As Fraser had started, so Tufnell finished. Although he bowled one over before lunch, it was not until the 52nd over of the innings that Ramprakash thought him worthy of a proper bowl. In his 12 overs, the man who cannot get a game for England this summer, because "the pitches don't suit", had Wells and Marsh caught on the sweep, and turned one past McCague's bat.

Wells had earned his runs, after labouring through 54 overs to hold Kent together. Their early order batting lacks discipline. How else does one account for Fulton's dismissal, caught hooking on the long leg boundary in the ninth over when two men are already back in the pavilion? What a daft way to go.

There is no point berating Fleming for indiscipline. If he had gone to Marlborough, whose first XI were in the news this week for a scholarship display of blocking, he would surely have been sent down for playing too many strokes. In no time at all, he was pulling Hewitt over the rope at square leg and, when he was not trying to take on the bowlers, he was defending extravagantly as if to prove that he could control his instincts.

According to Fleming, Kent are "heavyweights" in one-day cricket, which seems a strange way to describe a team that won its last knockout trophy 20 years ago. An hour's batting was long enough for him. Swishing to leg, he was caught in the deep. It was left to Wells and Marsh to carry the team to a bonus point.

Iglesides, playing only his second championship match of the summer, took his first wickets for two years when Kallis edged a low catch to slip and Weekes played on. To McCague, who bowled with real hostility, fell Ramprakash and Pooley, Fraser, Brown and Johnson, all caught by Strang, and, finally, Gatting, clean bowled.



Gooch, right, offers the benefit of his experience to Law at Chelmsford yesterday

Spotlight fades on Gooch

BY JACK BAILEY

CHELMSFORD (first day of four; Worcestershire won toss; Worcestershire have scored 328 for six wickets against Essex)

IT WAS Graham Gooch's day — MPs tabling motions of congratulations, the town crier putting in an appearance at the Chelmsford ground and the man himself receiving a standing ovation as he led Essex out amid a posse of photographers. It was, of course, his 44th birthday and his last appearance for Essex, but there everyone paused, for Worcestershire chose to bat and they batted all day, having been dug out of a hole by a century from Reubens Spiring.

Nor did Gooch get a bowl, although his career-best of seven for 14 was against Worcestershire — but that was in 1982 and time has marched on. Gooch did come half into the limelight reasonably early on, although in an unwanted

way. When Spiring had made 70, he skied over the head of Grayson, the bowler, equidistant between Gooch and Cowan at deep mid-on and, instead of one or both going for the catch, the fielders compromised. Neither got near the ball and Spiring went on.

He played sensibly, with his pronounced backlift and peculiarly restricted follow-through. His century came in a little more than three hours, he hit 14 fours and, together with Vikram Solanki — himself missed from a caught-and-bowled chance by Such with only a single to his name — he added 151 for the sixth wicket, after Worcestershire had been reduced to 166 for five.

All this Gooch business affected Tim Curtis in a peculiar way. Opening with Moody, he forsook his customary static role, moving swiftly and easily to 33 of the 53 put on for the first wicket. He fell to Andrew, putting in a rare first-

team appearance but now producing a ball that lifted sharply.

As Moody struggled on, Such dominated, varying his flight and straightening the odd ball. Hick looked good before he played no stroke at Stuart Law.

Then Such moved swiftly through the order. Moody was leg-before on the sweep. Haynes snapped up at silly mid-off. Leatherdale promised much until he also fell to Such as he cut unwisely. It was then roughly halfway through the day's play. Prospects of Gooch batting loomed large, but the game of cricket never was a great respecter of expectation.

Until, that is, Solanki failed to get on top of a ball from Law, the ball lobbed up and Gooch moved forward to take a low catch at short mid-on. Gooch was in the game at last, but not as much as young Spiring, the Worcestershire saviour and undefeated to the end.

Alleyne's all-round skills too much for Durham

BY DEREK HODGSON

CHELLENHAM (first day of four; Durham won toss; Gloucestershire, with five first-innings wickets in hand, are 167 runs ahead of Durham)

CLEEVE HILL was misty at the start, prompting the question: what damage would Mike Smith have done had he not been required by England? All that can be said is that his colleagues did not need him on a steamy, swinging morning. As Mark Alleyne, his captain took a career-best five for 14 in a Durham rout, 86 being their lowest first-innings total.

Gloucestershire then lost three wickets for 24 on a fine, clear afternoon, but there was little wrong with the pitch. Batsmen were surprised by late movement and, in Durham's case, it takes little to bring the whole house tumbling down.

It will be a shame if this is another match that finishes early, because this festival is one of the great remaining institutions and needs to be protected, sometimes from itself. The club marquee still stands handsomely around the boundary, but the standard of refreshment on offer to the general public has become either gruesome or expensive — or both.

Only John Morris, who once made 229 for Derbyshire in this ground, and Nick Speak offered prolonged resistance. Morris's departure, to a sharp, high nick when driving Alleyne, signalling a virtual surrender, with the remaining seven wickets going down in 12 overs for 24 runs.

Gloucestershire's close fielding was, as usual, high class, with two fast, low dives by Martyn Ball and Jack Russell worth recording on film. Their innings began almost as hesitantly as Durham's, but Matthew Windwoods provided the necessary application. Shaun Young laid about him and Durham's score was passed within 90 minutes. Windwoods's 75 came off 17 balls and contained 11 fours. Alleyne's timing then matched a serene evening.

Kumble to be given chance of making return trip

BY RICHARD HOBSON

NORTHAMPTON (first day of four; Surrey won toss; Surrey have scored 386 for four wickets against Northamptonshire)

THE Wantage Road ground was awash with speculation yesterday as Steve Coverdale, the Northamptonshire chief executive, confirmed that negotiations have reached an "advanced stage" with an overseas player, believed to be Anil Kumble, for next season. While Coverdale confirmed that the county has twice sounded out Shane Warne during the Australians' tour, he denied that an offer had been made. The fact that Warne has been linked with the captaincy also prompted what amounted to a vote of confidence in Rob Bailey, the present captain.

"Speculation is deeply upsetting to Rob, his family and those close to the club," Coverdale said. However, the issue will be reviewed at the end of the season.

It is impossible not to sympathise with Bailey. On this showing, he does not have much of an bowling attack to manipulate. He is acknowledged as one of the most pleasant men in the game and, after the victory over Essex on Saturday, said that he felt like performing a lap of honour in defence.

Any running around the boundary in this fixture is likely to be in pursuit of the ball. How he could have done with Kumble, the India leg spinner, who took 105 wickets for the club in 1995, rather than the wayward Mohammad Akram.

Darren Bicknell scored 162 on a straw-coloured pitch offering even bounce and a little turn for Snape, the off spinner. He hit 24 fours in 348 minutes before a tired pull found Taylor at mid-wicket. Neither he nor Adam Hollisake rolled for runs during a third-wicket stand of 175.

A fine throw from Penberthy accounted for Hollisake Sr, but even this presented a problem for Northamptonshire, as it introduced Alistair Brown to a tired attack.

Flintoff signs off with his maiden century

BY PAT GIBSON

SOUTHAMPTON (first day of four; Lancashire won toss; Lancashire have scored 423 for five wickets against Hampshire)

ANDREW FLINTOFF scored his maiden first-class century in his last match for Lancashire before leaving to captain the England Under-19 team and, in the process, questioned the argument that young men such as him would be better off continuing to learn their trade in championship cricket.

Even Zimbabwe Under-19 should be able to present a sterner test than Hampshire did yesterday. They knew what they were in for when they lost the toss on a flat pitch and lightning outfield and the only surprise was that Lancashire did not take full advantage until Flintoff and his captain, Watkinson, who also made a hundred, helped themselves in a fifth-wicket partnership of 214 in 43 overs.

Gallian, who was leg-before for test in Bovill's opening spell, and Fairbrother, who ran himself out for five, must have cursed themselves. Graham Lloyd and Nathan Wood may have a bit of explaining to do as well, if their fathers hear about how they threw away centuries that were there for the taking.

Lloyd, who always gives the bowlers a chance, was dropped on 33 but seemed to be heading inexorably for a hundred when he drove Udal to long-on, having struck 16 fours in his 90. Two overs later, Wood drove Udal to mid-off and was out for a career-best 52.

It was to be the last success that Udal enjoyed. Watkinson hit him for four sixes, two of which cleared the pavilion, while Flintoff, growing in confidence after being dropped on 12, had plundered 22 fours and a six when he was caught and bowled by Stephenson for 117.

DOWIE begin to fulfil promise

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

All the players in the deal below have played international bridge. Geir Helgemo performed immaculately — he was dummy. The others made three mistakes in the space of five cards.

Dealer West Love all IMPs

| | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ K54 | ♥ Q1085 | ♦ K984 | ♣ 10976 |
| ♥ J432 | ♠ K984 | ♥ 987 | ♦ 987 |
| ♦ J654 | ♣ 10976 | ♠ A1087 | ♥ 103 |
| ♣ J62 | ♠ A1087 | ♥ 103 | |

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: two of hearts

In the auction South showed a good hand with at least five spades and four diamonds. As West led a heart and declarer won with the ace, he cashed the ace and queen of spades (I discarded a club), then the king of hearts, and played a third spade to dummy on which I discarded a diamond.

After cashing the queen of hearts he led the queen of diamonds, running it to my king to leave this position:

| | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| ♠ — | ♥ 10 | ♦ K984 | ♣ 98 |
| ♥ J65 | ♠ 7 | ♥ 2 | ♦ A108 |
| ♦ J6 | ♣ A108 | ♥ 10 | |

I switched to the jack of clubs, which went to the king and ace and Brian Senior (East) returned a diamond. Declarer

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

DIKAMALI
a. A South African canoe
b. A twin-set
c. Gum

CHORASMIAN WASTE
a. Scrap precious metal
b. A plateau in Uzbek
c. A chorus girl's figure

FILACER
a. A court officer
b. A young racehorse
c. An oak tree

DRAGEE
a. A deep sea trawl
b. A fancy dress dancer
c. A medicinal sweet

Answers on page 46

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Chess for children

Sixteen junior champions emerged at the Nottingham "Gigafinal" of the UK Chess children's challenge on Sunday July 13, from a field of 410 players. These contestants each headed their section winning a cup and £70 and now go forward to the final stage of this marathon eight-month event. This will be held at the Royal Festival Hall, London on Saturday August 23.

Competition in the "gigafinal" was so intense that only three of last year's winners were able to win a title for the second year running — they were Sarah Hegarty, Teresa Khoo and Lucy Broomfield. The tournament was sponsored by Kasperov Chess Computers who will be sending each of the finalists a chess computer.

Six-year-old wins

In the preceding simultaneous display, woman grandmaster Susan Lalic, top board for the England women's team, amazingly lost a game to David Howell, 6.

White: David Howell

Black: Susan Lalic

Rotary Chess

Simultaneous 1997

French Defence

| | |
|---------|-----|
| 1 e4 | d5 |
| 2 d4 | c5 |
| 3 N3 | c4 |
| 4 Ng5 | N6 |
| 5 Bc4 | N6 |
| 6 Nf3 | N6 |
| 7 c3 | d5 |
| 8 Bc3 | Bc3 |
| 9 g3 | c4 |
| 10 cxd4 | d5 |
| 11 Nc3 | Qd7 |
| 12 Qb3 | Na5 |
| 13 Qb5 | Nc4 |
| 14 Qxc4 | O-O |

Mind Sports Olympiad

As well as hosting the final of the UK Chess Challenge, the Royal Festival Hall will also accommodate the first Mind Sports Olympiad which will take place at London's from August 18 to 24. This will consist of over 30 thinking sports, and entry details can be obtained on 0171-485 9146 or access website: <http://www.mindsports.co.uk/>

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in The Times, and is available from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £5.99 plus postage and packing).

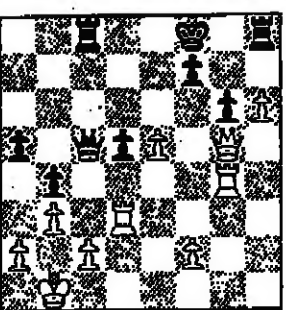
Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

While to play. This position is from the game Eppinger — Blum, Lugano 1985. In chess, the relative activity of the pieces is an important criterion for judging a position. Here all of White's pieces are active, while Black's king's rook is not participating in the game at all. Therefore it is not surprising that White can force a quick win. Can you see how?

Solution on page 46



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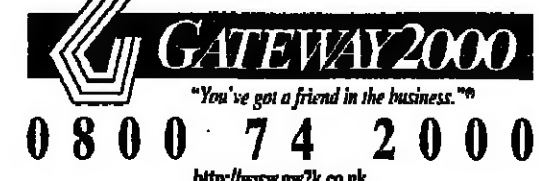
12.30 pm – 6.30 pm Mondays

9.30 am – 6.30 pm Tuesdays – Friday

10.00 am – 4.00 pm Saturdays

Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays

*Offer closes when the cows come home today (24th July '97)



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Devon rise to role of court jesters

JULIAN MUSCAT



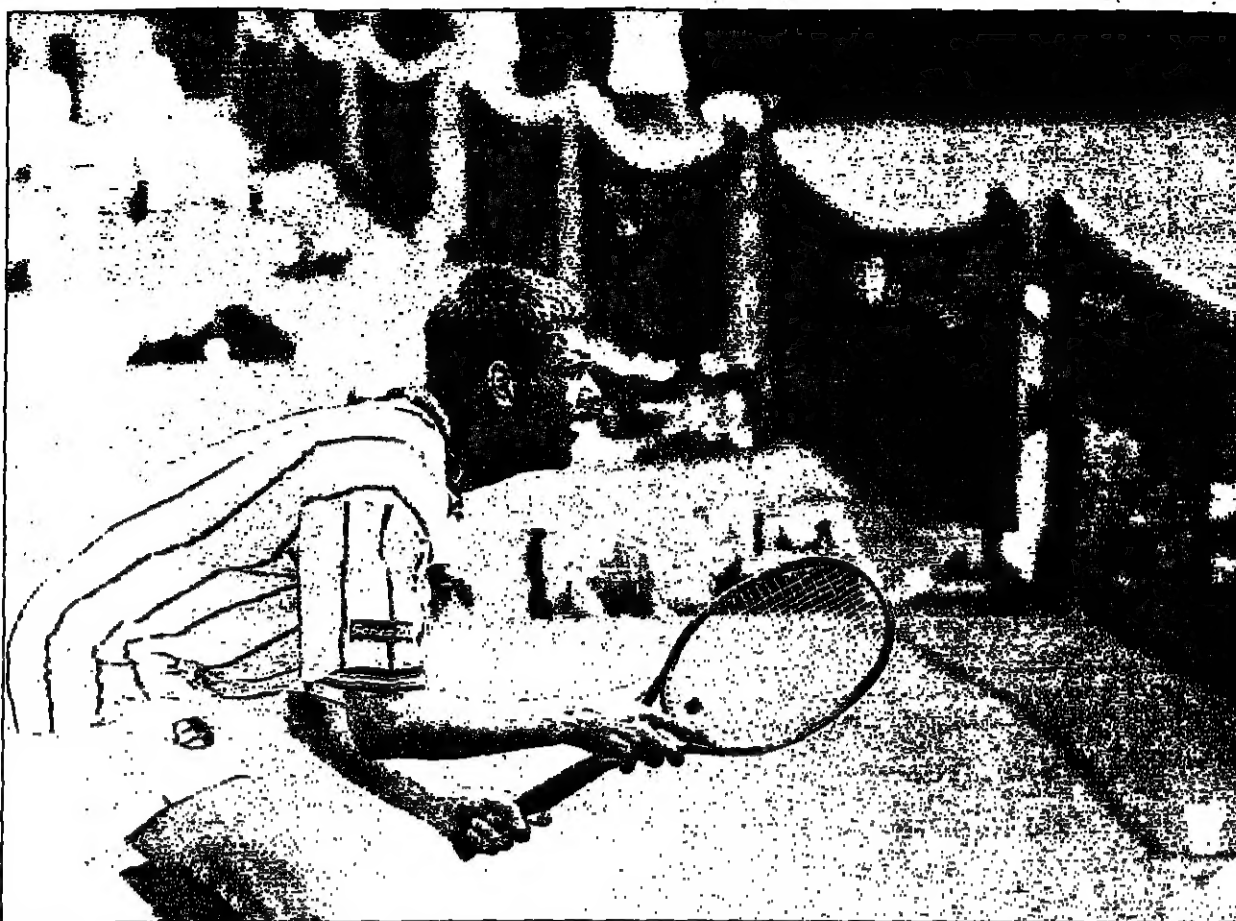
At County Tennis Week

Other counties will testify that the prospect of beating Devon increases with the progress of the Inter-County Cup. Play them on Monday and you will catch them at their best; play them on Friday and the collective strains of the week may have taken their toll. Devon are the homages of county week, the boys who play hard both on and off the court.

As much was evident at Eastbourne yesterday when, on another sweltering afternoon, the sextet arrived for the match with Hampshire and Isle of Wight clad as Father Christmas. They sang "Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way. Oh what fun it is to see Hampshire lose today."

"That was the only time I've ever been embarrassed to represent Devon," Peter Russell, the "Greg Rusedski" of the team, who joined Devon after gaining his first taste of this competition in Gloucestershire colours, said. Such antics have come to be expected among county week regulars. Some raise a knowing smile, while others are less generous. The boys themselves remain nonplussed.

"We don't want to offend anyone," Gary Drake, a former national junior champion, whose penchant for



Wood, of Devon, a winner in a drinking contest this week, goes for victory on court yesterday. Photograph: Gill Allen

dalliances has already seen him grace the tabloid front pages, said. "We are just enjoying the week, doing nothing more than having a few beers. It is strictly a boys' deal." Any late-night disturbances at the Grand Hotel, where all the players are staying, are attributed to them — a touch unjustly, as it turned out on Tuesday night. The end-of-week disco was promptly cancelled.

This Devon team mirrors the spirit of West Country supporters who journey to Twickenham for the rugby union county championship final. They cock a snook along the way and have long ceased to be concerned at their reputation. "Everyone expects us to look like a bunch of idiots, so

we don't mind," Daniel Ahl, 27, said. It was he who decreed that the team descended for dinner last night dressed as Nigel, a loud and tasteless character from the television soap, *EastEnders*.

This jovial approach does not extend to the courts, where Devon completed a remark-

Results

able rise from group seven, in as many years, to emerge as county champions in 1994. They successfully defended the title the following year, the Inter-County Cup centenary, and were dismayed that no Devonian tennis dignitary was present to witness either

victory. Now they play only for themselves — a tribute to the spirit characteristic of their rise from obscurity.

Ahl epitomises the players' commitment to each other. This is his tenth consecutive county week; by tomorrow, he will have played for 50 unbroken days. He was an usher at the wedding of both Drake and Gary Stewart, the latter chase Drake as his best man. Ahl is threatening to emigrate to Australia, so Jamie Bartlett, a Cambridge Blue and an economics undergraduate, must raise the money to repatriate him next year.

Mingling easily with the residents are Tom Hand and Steve Wood, their occasional American twang a legacy of their university tennis scholar-

ships in the United States. Then there is Peter Wright, identified by his peers as the best dancer among them.

Once again, Devon's men are acquiring themselves well on court. Victories on Monday and Tuesday were followed yesterday by a creditable performance in defeat against Hampshire and Isle of Wight, a match they never expected to win. Come tomorrow, with their status in group one already assured, they may decree the highlight of the week to be the victory for Wood, their rookie, in a beer-drinking contest against Stuart Rhodes, from Surrey. It showed that the youngsters of Devon are well placed to further their county's tradition at Eastbourne.

CYCLING: TEAM MAN EMERGES FROM PACK TO TAKE SPOTLIGHT WITH STAGE WIN IN TOUR DE FRANCE

Loyal support earns Stephens his big break

FROM JEREMY WHITTE IN COLMAR

NEIL STEPHENS, the Australian who now lives in Spain with his Basque wife, rode to the biggest win of his 13-year professional career in the Alsace town of Colmar yesterday after slipping clear of a small group of riders in the closing kilometres of the seventeenth stage of the Tour de France.

Stephens, one of the most respected and loyal team riders, or domestiques, in the professional bunch, has twice come close to Tour glory in the past,

most notably last year when he was set to win in Villeneuve-sur-Lot before a crash close to the finish ruined his chances.

"This is the best win of my life," he said as he was congratulated by his Festina team-mates. "Lots of times in the past, I haven't been able to ride for myself. This is the first time that I've been in such a strong team and been allowed the freedom to try for a stage win."

In pouring rain, the depleted field rolled out of Fribourg and headed north towards the border towns of the

Rhine Valley. In spite of having talked openly of quitting the race the previous evening, the defending champion, Bjarne Riis, 33, from Denmark, was one of the 143 riders huddling inside rain capes as they started the ride of 218 kilometres to Colmar.

For the first time, Riis, who has been troubled by a stomach bug, publicly criticised his Telekom team, which again grouped around Jan Ullrich, 23, their race leader, and failed to delegate a single rider to look after the Dane as he struggled to keep up.

Ullrich, with the race passing within

30 kilometres of his home in the Black Forest, was the centre of attention as thousands of German fans lined the road. "I didn't know that there were that many people in Germany," he said after finishing safely with the main field.

Stephens' initial attack came after 62 kilometres, when he tried his hand with a solo break, but the move gathered pace when he was joined by 12 other riders 20 kilometres later on the climb on the Côte de Develier.

Results, page 42

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 42

DIKAMALI (b) The native name of a resinous gum that exudes from the ends of young shoots of *Gardenia lucida*, a rubiacaceous shrub of India.

CHORASMIAN WASTE (c) Matthew Arnold, *Sohrab and Rustum*: "but the majestic River floated on / Out of the mist and hum of that low land, / Into the frosty starlight, and there moved / Rejoicing, through the husky Chorasmian waste." Under the solitary moon: the flow of / Right for the Polar Star, stop Orghuné / Brimming, and bright, and large."

FILACER (a) A former officer of the superior court at Westminster, who filed original writs and issued process thereon. Also a corresponding officer of the Irish courts. J. Chamberlayne, 1708: "A list of the Filacers of the court of common pleas with the counties belonging to each respective Filacer."

DRAGEE (c) A sugar plum or sweetmeat in the centre of which is a drug; intended for the more pleasant administration of medicinal substances. In modern use not restricted to sweetmeats serving as a vehicle for drugs — often a sugared almond. Charlotte Brontë, 1853: He was fond of bonbons and would give his dragees as freely as he lent his books. "Alice wanted to buy him some sweets. I asked if he would like dragees."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Rcl! wins, as 1... dxe2 runs into 2. Rd5! — Rd8 3. Qxd8 checkmate

PRIZES FOR CORRECT ANSWERS TO WORD-WATCHING: SEND ONE FOR DETAILS OF OTHER TITLES OR FOR MAIL ORDER DETAILS TO: THE TIMES CROSSWORD, 10, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W1P 8JS. Prizes: £100 for the correct answer to the crossword puzzle, £50 for the correct answer to the word-search puzzle, £25 for the correct answer to the word-definition puzzle, £10 for the correct answer to the word-anagram puzzle, £5 for the correct answer to the word-rebus puzzle, £2 for the correct answer to the word-picture puzzle, £1 for the correct answer to the word-maze puzzle, £0.50 for the correct answer to the word-search puzzle, £0.25 for the correct answer to the word-definition puzzle, £0.10 for the correct answer to the word-anagram puzzle, £0.05 for the correct answer to the word-rebus puzzle, £0.02 for the correct answer to the word-picture puzzle, £0.01 for the correct answer to the word-maze puzzle.

SAILING

MacArthur slips at the finish

BY EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT

ELLEN MACARTHUR, of Great Britain, is ninth overall in a 42-strong fleet after the first stage of the Trans-Gascoigne race, but she will be cursing her luck after completing the 320 miles from Port Bourgenay, in France, to Gijón, Spain.

Having recovered from a collision shortly after the start on Sunday, MacArthur had been in fifth position until the last few hours before reaching Gijón. However, thunderstorms and squalls caused a knockdown and a broken spinnaker halyard on her yacht, *Carphone Warehouse* — *Le Poisson*, dropping her back down the field.

The first leg was won by Tomas Coville, of France. The race continues with a 25-mile sprint to Cudillero on Saturday before returning back to Port Bourgenay the next day.

ATHLETICS

Longden helps Yates run back into favour

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

FOUR years after he last appeared in an international championship, Matthew Yates was restored to the Great Britain team yesterday, delivered there by Bruce Longden, who coached Daley Thompson and Sally Gunnell to Olympic gold medals. Yates, a former European indoor 1,500 metres champion, finished 1996 ranked only No 31 in Britain and, in desperation, turned to Longden, saying: "It is over for me unless Bruce can do it."

Yates's selection for the world championships in Athens, which begin a week on Saturday, represents a triumph for a man recognising his own shortcomings. In an interview with *The Times* last December, Yates admitted to an undisciplined lifestyle. Earning £80,000 a year for three years, Yates earned "nothing, maybe a couple of

grand" in 1996. "I was going out and drinking a lot. Now I have got nothing to show for it," Yates said then.

Yesterday, he told how Longden's training programme had helped him to run 3min 36.36sec in Hechtel, Belgium, last weekend, his fastest since 1993. "I owe it to him," Yates said, adding that, under Longden, he had acquired a "new attitude".

Keith Cullen and Adrian Passey were added at 5,000 metres, leaving Ian Gillespie to wonder how he could be omitted from the squad when he defeated Passey in Hechtel last Saturday. The word from the British Athletics Federation was that Passey's victory over Gillespie in the British trial a week earlier had held sway. Paul Walker was added at 800 metres, having achieved the qualifying mark on Tuesday, the deadline day.

An architectural trip

How Buildings Learn

BBC2 7.30pm

"Building is not something you want to do when you are stoned," says a sardonic contributor to the third part of Stewart Brand's look at how good buildings adapt. He's referring to the glass geodesic dome that was the brainchild of a Californian hippie who had the idea at a Who concert. Thirty years on, it is now a great glasshouse, home to a single lemon tree. The lemon that built it was not available for comment. Brand concentrates on the do-it-yourself aspect of building, proving that those who are involved in every stage of the building's construction have a much healthier home at the end of it. Some examples of the results may make you want to pick up a hammer straight away. But be warned. As Brand says, you may start a building but you will never finish it.

Third Rock from the Sun

BBC2 9.00pm

The storyline of four aliens, masquerading as humans gave up some wonderful opportunities for smart jokes and pokes at the human condition in the first series of this American comedy. The second series still has the excellent cast, headed by John Lithgow, and a crisp script but there is a slight feeling of desperation in the air. This first of a two-parter picks up where the last series ended with Dick's (Lithgow) evil double getting up to all sorts of nefarious deeds while good Dick is locked in an invisible box. The rest of the makeshift family set him free to do battle with the *doppelgänger* before he gets his nasty way with Dr. Alwright (Jane Curtin). By the way, the one with the green hair is basketball star Dennis Rodman making a cameo appearance. Quibbles apart, it is still good fun.

Hunting Bobby Oatway

Channel 4 9.00pm

What should be done with society's most reviled pariah? Bobby Oatway is a convicted paedophile. He's been in prison for 10 years, but his own son and stepdaughters for which he served ten a 13-year sentence. In this Canadian documentary, the director John Kastner's starting point is Oatway's release from prison to a half-way house, for a



The return of the aliens (BBC2 9pm)

chance to integrate back into society. The stepdaughters, now grown up, are determined that he should not be given that chance. They have set up a well-oiled media machine to ensure that everyone knows exactly who he is and what he has done. They are convinced he will offend again. Oatway is hounded back to prison, but have the sisters won? In three years' time Oatway will be free to walk around completely unsupervised. Anybody who watches Oatway will feel extreme uneasiness at that thought. A balanced and sensitive report on a emotive topic.

This Life

BBC2 9.45pm

With its original mix of sex, drugs and barristers, this drama serial has been quietly digging its way into the viewing habits of the nation's young. And not so young. Maybe it has something to do with their complicated sex lives. Perhaps it is the way the camera suddenly starts to wobble about for no reason, zooming in on lips and eyes and zooming out again. Whatever it is, the formula seems to work. As every episode has to have a movie pun in the title, this one is called *Milly Liar*. Unsurprisingly it features the tangled web Milly finds herself weaving to keep her affair with her boss O'Donnell from everyone. It is puzzling though, why someone who can afford to visit a therapist as often as Milly, should choose to live like a cash-strapped student. Frances Laess

RADIO CHOICE

Capital Gains

Radio 4 10.00am (FM only)

Julius Hirsch, retired billionaire, IRA man of letters. So is every other male in Collin Johnson's resumed comedy series. All the female characters are women of letters. However, it's not just because *Capital Gains* is entirely epistolary in structure that I highly recommend it. It is because it is very funny indeed and intelligently assumes, for instance, that we know who Socrates and Plato were and can recognise that Voltaire was the author of *Candide*. Johnson's decision to follow Candide's lead and spend his declining years cultivating his own garden. In episode one Hirsch (marvellously played by Peter Jones) becomes a champion of the environment in face of a dastardly plot to destroy it.

RADIO 1

7.00am Kevin Greening 8.00 Simon Mayo 11.30 Radio 1 Roadshow 12.30pm Newsbeat 12.45 John Peel 2.00pm Nicky Campbell 3.00pm Radio 1 Breakfast 4.00pm John Peel 5.00pm Session with Steve Lamacq 6.30pm Radio 1 Breakfast 7.00pm John Peel 8.00pm Radio 1 Breakfast 9.00pm Radio 1 Breakfast 10.00pm Radio 1 Breakfast 11.00pm Radio 1 Breakfast 12.00am Radio 1 Breakfast

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30pm 8.30pm Ken Bruce 11.30pm Kate Aske 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.00pm 4.00pm John Peel 5.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 6.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 7.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 8.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 9.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 10.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 11.00pm Radio 2 Breakfast 12.00am Radio 2 Breakfast

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am Morning Programme 6.30 The Breakfast Programme 7.00 The Breakfast Programme 7.30 The Breakfast Programme 8.00 The Breakfast Programme 8.30 The Breakfast Programme 9.00 The Breakfast Programme 9.30 The Breakfast Programme 10.00 The Breakfast Programme 10.30 The Breakfast Programme 11.00 The Breakfast Programme 11.30 The Breakfast Programme 12.00 The Breakfast Programme 12.30 The Breakfast Programme 1.00 The Breakfast Programme 1.30 The Breakfast Programme 2.00 The Breakfast Programme 2.30 The Breakfast Programme 3.00 The Breakfast Programme 3.30 The Breakfast Programme 4.00 The Breakfast Programme 4.30 The Breakfast Programme 5.00 The Breakfast Programme 5.30 The Breakfast Programme 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 6.30 The Breakfast Programme 7.00 The Breakfast Programme 7.30 The Breakfast Programme 8.00 The Breakfast Programme 8.30 The Breakfast Programme 9.00 The Breakfast Programme 9.30 The Breakfast Programme 10.00 The Breakfast Programme 10.30 The Breakfast Programme 11.00 The 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Feeling, faking and actors' methodology

Watching Lee Strasberg's *The Method* Man, the latest in BBC's *Reputations* series, you couldn't help wondering if there weren't any other lessons we non-actors could learn from the man who created screen giants such as Marlon Brando and Paul Newman — apart from the basic Aristotelian rule of never letting Marlon Brando sit over your lap, now that he has the manly build of a chest freezer. If you don't already know the gist of "The Method," let Ellen Burstyn, who studied at Strasberg's Actors Studio in New York, explain: "What Lee's training was, was to learn how not to lie. To really tell the truth. How not to act. That's what he taught. How not to pretend. To not act as though I feel bad, but to feel bad."

Okay, so many people thought the guy was some kind of nut — and a heartless one, at that, according to Ben Gazzara, who called him "occasionally very kind; too often a bit cruel" — but he did manage to attract (or produce) some of the world's greatest movie stars: Robert De Niro, Jack Nicholson, James Dean, Steve McQueen, Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino, Anne Bancroft, Janie Fonda, Harvey Keitel, Eli Wallach, Sally Field, Kenneth Williams, Mattie Jacques. Okay, not Williams and Jacques, but they put into perspective the stardom acting calibre of the rest of this list.

Between them, Strasberg's pupils have been nominated for more than 100 Oscars. That's probably why Al Pacino says: "Now, every body take five while we dig deep into our past so that we can summon up raw emotion of what it actually feels like to listen to what Al has to say... Ready? Okay, let's take it from the top..." That's probably why Pacino says: "I believe that acting as we know it today — in film, American acting



REVIEW

Joe Joseph

some say a Svengali-type figure who exploited their vulnerability. She even moved into the Strasberg family's apartment. Like many men of the time, Strasberg might well have wanted to experience the raw emotion of having Monroe live under the same roof as him (although not in the same bed) and might have realised that the smart way of achieving this was to become a famous acting coach. In

that sense, there was method in his madness. Clare Beavan's film was compelling, beautifully put together, and she culled some big stars eager to pay tribute to their late mentor: it was a nice touch to shoot the interviews in Katz's Lower East Side deli in black and white, creating an effect that was two parts *Broadway Danny Rose* and one part *Manhattan*. But we all knew Strasberg was a monster: he was famous for it, so there was no sense of stripping away a walnut veneer to reveal the chipboard man underneath. Could be that *Reputations* is running out of subjects: may be their researchers will strike lucky and find that Himmelfarb ached only to spend his life selling Mr Whippy ice cream to Jewish schoolkids in Berlin, or that Sylvester Stallone has spent his life making profitable movies but really wants to be an actor.

If Al Pacino ever finds himself cast as a nerve transplant surgeon, he'll have no option but to scrub up and spend time in the operating theatre with Susan Strasberg at Washington University's School of Medicine. The subject of BBC's *QED*, Dr MacKinnon is the first surgeon to have carried out a successful nerve transplant, reviving once-paralysed limbs by stitching in nerves from a dead donor.

Sadly, Brad Zappalowski, the 16-year-old whose 14-hour operation provides the core of the programme, is one of her operating-table failures: he had severed his left arm in a boating accident. It was a film that made the spirits soar, but it's stomach-heaving — unless you are the type that doesn't get squeamish at the sight of a bowl of spaghetti-style nerve fibres being scalp-trimmed and sewn into an arm sliced open to receive them. Luckily for fainthearts, the programme went out at 10pm: not so much post-watershed as post-supper.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (97095)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (92453)
 - 9.00am Breakfast News Extra (9124434)
 - 9.20am Ready, Steady, Cook (911548540)
 - 9.50am Kibbo (91227908)
 - 10.30am Gloria's Time Out With Jim Davidson (2937183)
 - 10.45am News (91 Regional News and weather (2937183))
 - 10.50am Colab: Fourth Test — England v Australia. Tony Lewis introduces ball-by-ball coverage of the first session at Headingley. Continues on BBC2 (9105105)
 - 12.30pm Neighbours: Catherine begins to wonder if she will ever get rid of her L plates (9102176)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (9105540)
 - 1.30pm Regional News (91020057)
 - 1.40pm Colab: Fourth Test — England v Australia. All the action from the first afternoon at Headingley (91019279)
 - 4.00pm Popeye (7667250) 4.10pm Dinobabies (4036337) 4.35pm Cartoon Critics (9177075)
 - 5.00pm Newsround (9118144)
 - 5.10pm Skyline: A revealing long-lept secret (911400257)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (9108556)
 - 6.00pm One O'Clock News (91347)
 - 6.30pm Regional News (91027)
 - 7.00pm Watchdog: Values: Is Money How to transform a kitchen in 48 hours: a look at driving schools; raincoats are put to the test; Plus: Vanessa Feltz's essential shopping guide (910618)
 - 7.30pm EastEnders: Ian puts an interesting proposition to Pat, while the long arm of the law forces Nigel into a corner. Grant has a romantic encounter, which gives him a surprising sense of self-realisation (910618)
 - 8.00pm Airport: Diana, Princess of Wales, tries to slip unnoticed past Heathrow's ever-alert press corps (910618)
 - 8.30pm Golden Hour of Fame (910783)
 - 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News (910453)
 - 9.30pm One Foot in the Grave: The Matlow household tells you of an evil curse. Comedy, starring Richard Wilson and Annette Crook (91142873) WALES: 9.30pm Referendum '97 (910273) 10.10pm Smith and Jones (910273) 10.40pm The Last Governor (910273) 11.45pm Film: The Pink Panther Strikes Again (910273) 1.25pm News, headlines, weather (913941)
 - 10.00pm Smith and Jones: Last episode in this series of 'outlandish' comedy from Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones (910784)
 - 10.30pm The Last Governor (4/5) Public anxiety in Hong Kong over how the 1997 handover may affect civil rights: forces Governor Chris Patten to call the 1995 elections in an attempt to pave the way for democracy (9115640)
 - 11.35pm The Pink Panther Strikes Again (1976) Peter Sellers, as accident-prone Inspector Clouseau, lands off the unwanted attentions of a murder syndicate. Directed by Blake Edwards (9117205)
 - 1.15am Weather (9117205)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am O U: Listening In The Dark (7708308) 8.25pm Flying In Birds (7787415)
 - 8.30pm Natural Navigators (910559) 7.15pm See Hear Breakfast News (91055924)
 - 7.30pm Teletubbies (778182) 7.55pm Brum (91055924) 8.10pm Raccoons (91055924) 8.35pm Bright Spark (91055924) 9.05pm Splooman (91055924) 9.35pm Glad Rags (91055924)
 - 10.00pm The Moonies (7081417) 10.25pm Oakie Oaks (7428569) 10.40pm Spider (91055924) 10.45pm Teletubbies (91055924) 11.15pm The Record (91055924) 11.40pm Moon over Miami (91055924) 12.30pm For the Love of It (91055924)
 - 12.35pm Cricket: Fourth Test England v Australia (91055924)
 - 1.00pm A to Z of Food (25835227) 1.10pm Beechgrove Garden: The First Season (70357845) 1.40pm Blockbusters (91055924) 2.05pm The Natural World (91055924) 3.05pm News (91055924) 3.30pm Westerns with Nick Ross (91055924) 3.55pm News (91055924) 4.10pm Cricket: Fourth Test Coverage from Headingley (91055924)
 - 4.35pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Sisko is sent back to earth to be acting head of Starfleet security (91055924)
 - 7.10pm Ren and Stimpy: A foreign clown finds a friend in Stimpy (91055924)
 - 7.30pm How Buildings Learn: Stewart Brand explores how people use buildings (91055924)
 - 8.00pm Wild Harvest with Nick Nairn: Nick has a scuba-diving lesson and picks blackberries in preparation for an underwater scallop harvest; picking blackberries, organic food, farming, and meals up with a Highland cattle farmer who uses organic methods (91055924) WALES: 8.00pm and Now, Over to Our Friends in Wales 8.30pm Homeland at the Royal Welsh Show
 - 8.30pm Spider: Spider hunting; weird and wonderful stilt climbing; and beach furniture in Somerset (91055924)
 - 9.00pm Third Rock from the Sun: A sci-fi comedy about four aliens who assume human form and come to live on Earth (91055924)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (3559940) 9.25pm Win, Lose or Draw (911548279) 9.55pm Judge Judy: See Monday (911548279) 10.20pm News (91055924) 10.25pm Regional News (91055924)
 - 10.30pm Cruel Doubt (1/2) Mini-series based on a true story. A woman is accused of murder when her husband is killed in their bed (91055924)
 - 12.20pm Regional News (91055924)
 - 12.30pm ITN News (91055924)
 - 12.55pm Shortland Street (91055924)
 - 1.25pm Home and Away (91055924)
 - 1.50pm Cat Crazy (91055924)
 - 2.20pm Contract for Murder (91055924)
 - 3.20pm News (91055924) 3.25pm Regional News (91055924) 3.30pm Potomac Park (91055924) 3.40pm Wzozos (91055924) 3.50pm Rupert (91055924) 4.15pm Transylvania Pet Shop (91055924) 4.40pm Reboot (91055924)
 - 5.10pm A Country Practice (91055924)
 - 5.40pm ITN News (91055924)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away: Chloe finds what she thinks is a new direction in life (91055924)
 - 6.25pm HTV Weather (91055924)
 - 6.30pm The West Tonight (91055924)
 - 7.00pm Emmerdale: Charlie plucks up the courage to confront Greg (91055924)
 - 7.30pm 3-D: Should there be a national registration system for nannies? Julie Sonjeyville introduces a film highlighting flaws in the current system (91055924)
 - 8.00pm The Bill: Mr Friday Night Boyden and Page question a suspect in connection with the disappearance of a girl whose loss of the good life has severely led her into very bad company (91055924)
 - 8.30pm Undercover: Customs Trevor McDonald narrows the remarkable, true story of how determined Customs officer Lesley Allen smashed a gold-smuggling operation worth millions (91055924)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Film: Going in Style (91055924)
 - 12.55pm-1.25pm A Country Practice (91055924)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (91055924)
 - 6.25pm Central News (91055924)
 - 10.40pm Film: Iron Eagle II (91055924)
 - 12.40pm Funnies (91055924)
 - 1.15pm Rockman (91055924)
 - 2.15pm The Loop (91055924)
 - 2.45pm God's Gift (91055924)
 - 3.40pm Late and Loose (91055924)
- WESTCOUNTRY**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Film: Going in Style (91055924)
 - 12.55pm Home and Away (91055924)
 - 1.20-1.50pm Emmerdale (91055924)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (91055924)
 - 6.00-6.30pm Westcountry Live (91055924)
 - 10.45pm Overdrive (91055924)
 - 11.15pm Crowded House: Farewell to the World Concert (91055924)
 - 12.15pm Weekly World News (91055924)
- MERIDIAN**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Cartoon Time (91055924)
 - 10.40pm David the Gnome (91055924)
 - 11.05pm Cartoon Time (91055924)
 - 11.25pm Bravestarr (91055924)
 - 11.50pm Dinosaur (91055924)
 - 5.10pm-5.40pm Home and Away (91055924)
 - 6.00pm Meridian Tonight (91055924)
 - 6.30-7.00pm Grass Roots (91055924)
 - 10.30pm Meridian News and Weather (91055924)
 - 10.45pm Film: The Killing Mind (91055924)
- ANGLIA**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Cartoon Time (91055924)
 - 10.40pm David the Gnome (91055924)
 - 11.05pm Cartoon Time (91055924)
 - 11.25pm Bravestarr (91055924)
 - 11.50pm Dinosaur (91055924)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (91055924)
 - 6.25pm Anglia News (91055924)
 - 10.30pm Anglia News and Weather (91055924)
 - 10.45pm The Magic and Mystery Show (91055924)
 - 11.15pm Waterlilies (91055924)
 - 11.45pm New York News (91055924)

- CHANNEL 5**
- 6.00am Sesame Street (910705)
 - 7.00pm The Bigger Breakfast Incorporates 9.05pm Saved by the Bell: The New Class (910705) 9.35pm The Secret World of Alex Mack 10.05pm Sister, Sister (910705) 10.35pm The Crystal Maze (910705) 11.35pm The Bigger Breakfast (910705)
 - 12.00pm House to House Political magazine (910705) 12.30pm My So-Called Life (910705) 1.25pm Making Money: A New Zealand comedy short (910705)
 - 1.40pm Stanley and Livingstone (1939, b/w) Biopic starring Spencer Tracy, Nancy Kelly and George Hackenschmidt. Directed by Henry King (910705)
 - 3.30pm Here's One I Made Earlier: Beef and tempura jumble; chicken and tomato roulette; brandy snap baskets (910705)
 - 4.00pm Bewitched (910705) 4.30pm Countdown (910705) 4.55pm Ricki Lake (910705) 5.30pm Pet Rescue (910705) 5.50pm The De France Colmar to Montebellard: a distance of 175km (910705)
 - 6.30pm Hollyoaks: Teen soap. Kurt and Ruth experience difficulties in married life (910705)
 - 7.00pm Channel 4 News (910705) Includes headlines and weather at 7.30 (910705)
 - 7.50pm Deadline 2000: Sally Ann Flanders of Global Action Plan says we must start being responsible about water usage (910705)
 - 8.00pm Time Team: Archaeological adventure series. The team travel to Cornwall to investigate a 2,000-year-old underground chamber. With Mick Aston and Tony Robinson (910705)

- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE**
- Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 83 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 83 are 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.28 MHz.
- 6.00am 5 News Early (9109590)
 - 7.30pm Hallelujah (9109594) 8.00pm The End Byrdie: A Comedy Series (7829144) 8.30pm WideWorld (7829145)
 - 9.00pm Espresso (9109595) 10.00pm Exclusive! (9109595) 10.30pm Instant Gardens (9109595)
 - 11.00pm Leesa (9109595) 11.50pm Double Espresso (9109595) 12.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful (9109595)
 - 12.30pm Family Affairs (9109595)
 - 1.00pm 5 News Update (9109595) 1.05pm Sunset Beach (9109595) 2.00pm 5 News Company (9109595)
 - 3.30pm The War Between Us (1995) with Sherron Lawson, Mielko Ochuko and Robert Wieden. Drama about a friendship between a Japanese woman and a Canadian in the Second World War. Directed by Anne Wheeler (9109595)
 - 5.20pm 5 News: Late Extra (9109595)
 - 5.30pm 100 Per Cent: The game show without a host (9109595)
 - 6.00pm Move On: Fast-moving game show (9109595)
 - 6.30pm Family Affairs: Chris tells Duncan that he no longer trusts him (9109595)
 - 7.00pm Exclusive! Entertainment news, featuring stories on the film, television and fashion plus all the latest gossip with John Bradbury (9109595)
 - 7.30pm Close Encounters: Man Made for Nature: The creation of a new landscape in a valley in Bristol (9109595)
 - 8.00pm The Car Show: Motoring magazine presented by Mariella Frostrup and Tristram Payne (9109595)
 - 8.30pm 5 News (9109595)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The names on the Video PlusCodes are listed in the Video PlusCodes, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. VideoPlus+ (TM), PlusCode (TM) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

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TOURIST RATES

For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday.

SKY 1

- 6.00am Morning Glory (910273) 8.00pm Regis and Kaitia Lee (910273) 10.00pm The Last Governor (910273) 11.45pm Film: The Pink Panther Strikes Again (910273) 1.25pm News, headlines, weather (913941)
- 10.00pm Smith and Jones: Last episode in this series of 'outlandish' comedy from Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones (910784)
- 10.30pm The Last Governor (4/5) Public anxiety in Hong Kong over how the 1997 handover may affect civil rights: forces Governor Chris Patten to call the 1995 elections in an attempt to pave the way for democracy (9115640)
- 11.35pm The Pink Panther Strikes Again (1976) Peter Sellers, as accident-prone Inspector Clouseau, lands off the unwanted attentions of a murder syndicate. Directed by Blake Edwards (9117205)
- 1.15am Weather (9117205)

SKY 2

- 7.00pm Superboy (910273) 7.30pm Superboy (910273) 8.00pm Superboy (910273) 8.30pm Superboy (910273) 9.00pm Superboy (910273) 9.30pm Superboy (910273) 10.00pm Superboy (910273) 10.30pm Superboy (910273) 11.00pm Superboy (910273) 11.30pm Superboy (910273) 12.00pm Superboy (910273)

SKY NEWS

Widearea news coverage, with bulletin on the hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SKY MOVIES

- 6.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 7.30pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 8.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 8.30pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 9.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 9.30pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 10.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 10.30pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 11.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 11.30pm Things Change (1988) (910273) 12.00pm Things Change (1988) (910273)

SKY SPORTS 1

- 7.15pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 7.30pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 7.45pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 8.00pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 8.15pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 8.30pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 8.45pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 9.00pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 9.15pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 9.30pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 9.45pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 10.00pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 10.15pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 10.30pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 10.45pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 11.00pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 11.15pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 11.30pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 11.45pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869) 12.00pm Five Come Back (1996) (272869)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

- 6.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 6.30pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 6.55pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 7.20pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 7.45pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 8.10pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 8.35pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.25pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.50pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 10.15pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 10.40pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.05pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.30pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.55pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 12.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705)

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SKY SPORTS 3

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EUROSPORT

- 6.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 6.30pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 6.55pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 7.20pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 7.45pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 8.10pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 8.35pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.25pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 9.50pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 10.15pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 10.40pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.05pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.30pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 11.55pm Video PlusCodes (910705) 12.00pm Video PlusCodes (910705)

UK GOLD

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THE DISNEY CHANNEL

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FOX KIDS NETWORK

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RACING 43

Crowd sizes to be restricted for Cheltenham Festival

SPORT

THURSDAY JULY 24 1997

TENNIS 46

Devon's boys' brigade playing hard and fast in Eastbourne



Pivotal contest at Headingley may decide destiny of finely-balanced Ashes series

England await moment of truth

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

THE preparations could not have gone better. The reformed team has spent three full days together, the pitch has been hand-picked and the Australians are being self-righteous. All that is left is the small matter of winning. For England, it is a case of now or never.

By the precedents of recent series, it is a minor triumph for England to stand level with Australia three games into the summer. It will mean next to nothing if they are behind by next Monday, for then there will probably be no way back, but if the fourth Cornhill Test can be won, the Ashes should follow.

After Edgbaston, and that long-ago euphoria, Headingley could always be identified as England's best chance of earning another win. There is something about the place, something that will be oddly missed if Yorkshire resist the efforts of the ground's owners to keep them there and uproot to Wakefield. By way of a start, conditions promise a positive result. By way of a warning, Australia need not be on the wrong end of it.

Clearly, they are piqued. Yesterday, Mark Taylor, the captain, expanded on his censure of the late change of pitch and gave his view that the new surface, agreed upon only last Friday, is "underprepared". He ventured no opinion on how it would behave, on the contrary suggesting that he did not have the first idea.

Taylor's disapproval is being echoed by Alan Crompton, the tour manager, who yesterday sought a meeting with David Graveney, the

chairman of the England selectors. It was Graveney who endorsed the change, but only after receiving a phone call last Wednesday, while on holiday in Spain, from Harry Brind, the inspector of pitches. The anxiety of Brind — who fussed proprietorially over the new pitch throughout yesterday — is easy to understand and so, in a sense, is the dismay of the touring team. The Australians, however, must beware of portray-

he should concede that the England authorities were entitled to be alarmed over the look of the original.

It is a startling sight, too dry for comfort and remarkably bare at the ends. Warne would doubtless have relished it, but the match might not have lasted three days. Defeat in such circumstances would have constituted a spectacular own goal, one for which the England management would rightly have been castigated.

For many years past, England have been accused of inertia on such matters, of failing to exercise vigilance over their home pitches and of frequently handing the opposition their preferred conditions. To criticise the pro-active stance of the present management, then, would be extreme hypocrisy.

Disingenuous though it may sound, the claim that the switch was made to achieve a better surface gains credence once the pitches are inspected together. The new pitch is more evenly grassed and will be cut again this morning. England's intention is to show their faith in it by batting first.

This may change if the weather turns. There is talk of low cloud and possibly rain over Leeds this morning and the temptation to bowl first would then be severe. Michael Atherton, while dismissing the great pitch debate as "a lot of nonsense", did agree yesterday that overcast mornings at Headingley invariably mean the ball will swing and seam.

Covers remained on the pitch in bright sunshine yesterday, retaining its degree of moisture. Taylor furrowed his brow and said it was a shade soft, that the soil looked different here and that if he won the toss he would be uncertain what to do.

Australia have at least settled on their team, Ponting for Bevan at No 6 being the one change from Old Trafford. England's final place remains open. Atherton was willing to discount the option of an all-seam attack — a mistake made both in 1993, when Australia were last here, and last summer — but there is a strong chance that Mike Smith will make his debut ahead of either Dean Headley or Andy Caddick.

Headley, whose fitness is a recurring worry, had a second long bow yesterday and any overnight reaction would discount him. Otherwise, the choice comes down to keeping faith with a man in possession, with 11 wickets in the series to date, or including a swing bowler who ought to be



Graham Gooch, minus his trademark moustache, acknowledges the applause at Chelmsford. Photograph: Stefan Rousseau

Gooch's last stand must wait

suited to this ground better than any in the country.

If Smith, of Gloucestershire, never plays another Test, he should be chosen this morning. Short in stature, mild in manner, studious in his steel-rimmed spectacles, he is not the archetypal fast bowler but

Ponting's chance 44
Edgbaston lit up 44
McCague's blast 45

he bristles at suggestions that he is too short, too slow or simply too nice. "I've got enough pace to be taken seriously," he said. "I've hit a few with my bouncer."

His great asset, however, is the late swing that consistently dismisses top-order players. It is in his favour that both Australia openers are left-handers, to whom he naturally swings the ball away, but

the number of right-handers he dismisses either bowled or leg-before is testimony to his accuracy. "Like all Yorkshiremen, I am tight," he said. "I hate giving runs away."

Smith's family, who live in Barley, will be at Headingley in force today, swelling the crowd to virtual capacity. Friday and Saturday are both sold out. The public, plainly, has not lost faith in England, even if the bookmakers, who price them as the 100-30 outsiders, appear to have done.

"We gave a poor performance at Old Trafford," Atherton said bluntly. "We contributed to our own downfall there. But one poor performance need not bring panic changes and the selectors sent a clear, strong message to that effect. Now it's up to us. Effectively, this is now three Test series and no side wants to lose the first of three."

FEW cricketers announce the match of their retirement. (Jack Bailey writes). Even fewer reach 44 before they call it a day. Graham Gooch did just that when he decided last weekend to bow out at the end of the game against Worcestershire which began at Chelmsford yesterday — his 44th birthday.

The crowd of nearly 4,000 gave Gooch a standing ovation at the start of play. Barchaeved — and clean-shaven — he waved in acknowledgment as he took the field at the head of the Essex team (he surrendered the captaincy to Paul Prichard three seasons ago).

There was a measure of disappointment for those who came to see Gooch in his 39th first-class match in that

Worcestershire were batting. Altogether, 3,699 of the 44,830 runs he had scored before this match had been gathered here, as had 29 of his 128 centuries, including his highest score for Essex, 275. One more hundred would put him alongside Len Hutton. Gooch has scored more Test runs, 8,900, than any other Englishman and played a leading part in six championship victories for Essex.

At the end of the day, Gooch was far from his usual phleg-

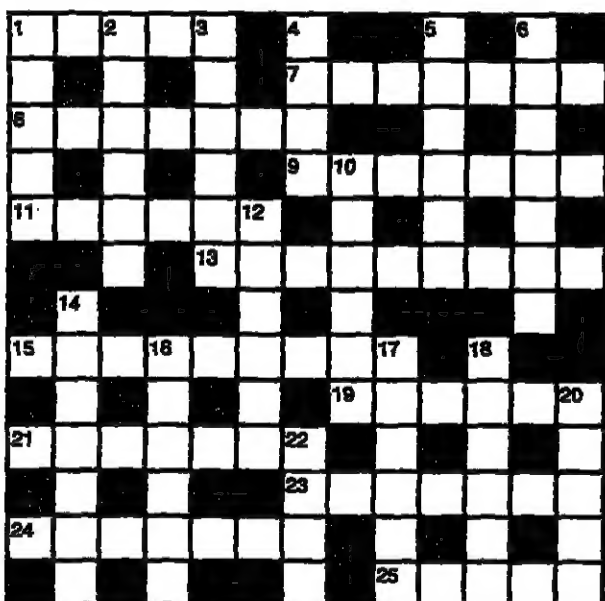
matic self. He fought hard, unsuccessfully, to stifle the emotion in his voice as he said: "My father, Alf, who passed away in December, wanted me to play one last season. I'm just a bit sad. If he's watching from up there, that it has not been as good a season as it could have been for him."

"He was my biggest supporter. He came to all my games. I miss him a lot."

Essex frustrated, page 45

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1154 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



ACROSS

- 1 Impress; character (5)
- 7 Integrated; chemical-free (farming) (7)
- 8 Affect harmfully (7)
- 9 "This blessed plot, — this —" (R. I.) (7)
- 11 Ploughed row (6)
- 13 US state, sounds like fresh puller (5,6)
- 15 One of similar appearance (9)
- 19 Surviving (6)
- 21 Nervous shaking (7)
- 23 Betrayal of country (7)
- 24 Brief (7)
- 25 Plainest Gk. order (5)

DOWN

- 1 Join (timber; neckwear) (5)
- 2 Provide (6)
- 3 Venom (6)
- 4 Speck of dust (4)
- 5 Warnings (6)
- 6 Trail blazer (7)
- 10 A serious matter (2,4)
- 12 Sam —, Pickwick's servant (6)
- 14 Keep eye on (7)
- 16 Tasteless, sentimental art (6)
- 17 Break (limb) (6)
- 18 Roman emperor's title (6)
- 20 Pick-me-up (5)
- 22 Check; stalk (4)

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All flights are subject to availability.

Post your entry to Times Two Crossword, PO Box 686, London E2 8SP to arrive by next Monday. The winners' names and solution will appear on Wednesday.

Name/Address

SOLUTION TO NO 1153

ACROSS: 1 Cachet 5 Call 9 Canall 10 Ashina
11 Teatall 12 Orgies 15 Waffle 18 Cucumber 20 Bandir
22 Ambled 23 Seck 24 Nisde
DOWN: 2 Archer 3 Hit off 4 Tostat 6 Aunt 7 Flamebe
8 Stalom 13 Gormless 14 Nectar 16 Abacus 17 Lendil
19 Cuban 21 Dupe

World Cup bid gets £9m boost

By JOHN GOODBODY

A RECORD £9 million is being raised to promote England football's attempt to stage the 2006 World Cup finals, the highest figure ever spent in trying to bring an international sports event to Britain.

With England facing a fierce battle with Germany, who are still upset that there will be a rival European candidate for 2006, the Government is providing support from the Foreign Office, while the Prime Minister is ready to meet foreign officials when they visit London.

The Football Association has already committed £3 million and is expected to be matched with £3 million from the FA Premier League and a further £3 million from lottery funding. Alex McGivan, director of the World Cup campaign, said yesterday: "I am not anticipating any problems over funding."

The Government does not yet have direct control of lottery funding, although its lawyers are examining whether this may be possible. For the moment, the lottery money for bringing leading events to this country is controlled by the English Sports Council, but the Government wants lottery money spent on the bid to stage the cup here for the first time since 1966.

The £9 million will exceed by more than £4 million the figure spent by Manchester in its unsuccessful attempt to

Liverpool talk to German forward

By DAVID MADDOCK

LIVERPOOL appear likely to plunge back into the transfer market within the next few days to secure the services of an experienced forward, after the capture this week of Paul Ince. Roy Evans, the manager, is at an advanced stage of negotiations with Karl Heinz Riedle, the Germany forward, whose two goals won the European Cup for Borussia Dortmund in May.

Evans is keen to secure a forward partner for Robbie Fowler and Riedle fits the bill, even though he will be 32 in September. He has just enjoyed possibly the best season of his career and has experienced an international renaissance. Riedle will Liverpool a fee of just £1.5 million, but it is understood his salary will be more than £1 million a year for the length of a three-year contract.

However, Riedle also has had talks with Sampdoria and AS Roma and may be persuaded to return to Italy, the country where he had a less-than-happy experience with Lazio. Paul Gascoigne's former club.

Evans hopes to move swiftly to head off any further Italian interest and the transfer could be completed by the weekend. If not, however, he is still pursuing two other possible targets a little closer to home. Earlier this week, Evans inquired about Egil Olsen, the Southampton for-

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| HONG KONG | 34.08 | 68.78 | 50% |
| INDIA | 64.63 | 119.85 | 46% |
| ISRAEL | 44.65 | 79.45 | 44% |
| JAPAN | 28.20 | 76.99 | 63% |
| MALAYSIA | 44.65 | 108.10 | 59% |
| NEW ZEALAND | 25.85 | 49.00 | 47% |
| PAKISTAN | 76.38 | 133.25 | 43% |
| RUSSIA | 47.00 | 79.45 | 41% |
| SINGAPORE | 32.90 | 68.78 | 52% |
| SOUTH AFRICA | 44.65 | 101.66 | 56% |
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